

HOLY ORDERS AND COMPLETENESS OF THE CHURCH



H.J.M TURNER

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In *Holy Orders and Completeness of The Church* the author seeks to describe the pattern of Holy Orders. He also uses sound ecclesiology to ask how bishops, priests and deacons ought to be related to one another and to the order of 'unordained' Christians.

Sources from diverse backgrounds are used throughout, often accompanied by translations from their original languages. In *Holy Orders and Completeness of The Church* the author does not examine in detail texts from the New Testament. Instead he concentrates on texts written roughly between the end of the first century and the end of the fourth – the formative period of development for early Christianity.

In this excellently researched work, the author's expert opinion is presented in a well-constructed and extremely clear manner, making the text accessible to both academics of theology and those with less knowledge in the subject.

The author closes the book by summing up his arguments and providing some views on the way ahead for the Church. He also presents his views on areas beyond the Local Church, with particular emphasis on Rome and the papacy.

Fully indexed and with a comprehensive Select Bibliography, this book will prove to be of great value to the interested reader and researcher alike.

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OF THE CHURCH

by

H.J.M TURNER

Published by

**MELROSE
BOOKS** 

An Imprint of Melrose Press Limited
St Thomas Place, Ely
Cambridgeshire
CB7 4GG, UK
www.melrosebooks.com

FIRST EDITION

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Cover designed by Geoff Hobbs Design

ISBN 1 905226 00 4

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Printed and bound in Great Britain by:
Bath Press Limited, Lower Bristol Road,
Bath, BA2 3BL, UK

YE ARE COMPLETE IN HIM
(*Colossians 2:10, AV*)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Those whom I particularly wish to thank for helping me with this book are: Geoffrey Milburn and Donald Gray, for reading early drafts and offering useful suggestions, Bishop Kallistos for kindly writing the Foreword, and my wife Jean for much assistance with proof-reading and compiling the index.

FOREWORD

During the century that has recently drawn to a close, what has been the key question for Christian theology? Surely, above all else, it has been the nature of the Church. Because of the widespread collapse of the traditional alliance between Church and state, because of an ever-increasing secularism, and more positively because of the movement towards visible unity, Christians everywhere have been challenged to ask themselves with fresh urgency the basic ecclesiological questions: What is the Church here for? What does the Church do, which no one and nothing else can do? And how is this uniqueness reflected in our ecclesial structures and ministry? Despite all that has been said and written in the last hundred years, the final word on this subject has certainly not yet been uttered. What the Russian Orthodox scholar, Archpriest Georges Florovsky said half a century ago remains no less true today: 'The theology of the Church is still *im werden*, in the process of formation.' (*Collected Works*, vol. 1, p.58)

To this continuing discussion Dr. John Turner has made an original and perceptive contribution. He is well informed about both past history and present debates. He revisits familiar questions, but from a fresh and genuinely constructive viewpoint. Critical, yet generous in his approach, he is a bridge-builder, indicating how each of us, whatever our church membership, can learn from traditions not our own. This is a book that requires to be read with care, but anyone making the effort to do so will be greatly rewarded.

Studying this book, again and again I nodded in agreement. Like the author, I believe that in our ecclesiology we should look for guidance above all to St Ignatius of Antioch – yet without becoming 'Ignatian

fundamentalists' and without allowing our admiration for him to lead us into a kind of congregationalism. Dr. Turner is well aware that we cannot simply revert to the past; the People of God moves forward, not back. I welcome the author's repeated insistence that the Christian ministry is to be seen, not simply in functional and pragmatic terms, but in an 'iconic' perspective. Ordained persons, that is to say, act within the total community as 'signs', and thus the important thing is not primarily what they do, but what they are.

As Dr. Turner rightly argues, we need to re-emphasize the corporate and collegial character of the order of presbyters – an unhappy individualism has crept in from the fourth century onwards – and we need to revive (and rethink) the diaconate. These are points that apply to Orthodoxy as well as to the Christian West. I am encouraged also by the treatment of Papal primacy. Dr. Turner quotes to good effect the words of the 'Monk of the Eastern Church', Fr. Lev Gillet, about a 'primacy of humility, service and love ... not simply a primacy of honour or a nebulous sort of leadership, but a unique pastoral mission.' The Pope, as St. Leo the Great affirms, is a 'watchman' or 'sentinel' on the ramparts of the spiritual city. Here is an understanding of primacy that the Orthodox Church can readily endorse.

This is a stimulating book that has led me to reflect anew on the mystery of the Church that is always new, yet always the same. I have learnt many things from it, and I am delighted to commend it.

— *Bishop Kallistos of Diokleia*

CONTENTS

I	Introductory.....	7
II	Ignatius: A Structure of Ministries	22
III	Other Contributors, and the 'Ignatian' Structure	33
IV	The Onset of Many Changes.....	45
V	Further Developments – their Significance for Ecclesiology	64
VI	Some Insights from Liturgy.....	86
VII	Summing Up and Looking Ahead.....	114
VIII	Beyond the Local Church.....	131
	Select Bibliography	142
	Abbreviations	144
	Index	145

I INTRODUCTORY

The New Testament never speaks either of 'holy orders' or of 'ordained ministers', but in *I Corinthians* 12 St Paul presents his well-known comparison between the structure of the members of the physical body and the structure of ministries in Christ's Body, the Church. According to *Ephesians* (4: 11f.) the gifts of the ascended Christ 'were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, for the equipment of the saints, for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ.' (*R.S.V.*) Referring to the passage which includes these verses, J-M.R. Tillard wrote, 'It is always the primary action of God the Father, the Lord and the Spirit, which explains to some extent the existence of ministries...'¹

As a further preliminary let me add a quotation from the Congregationalist D. Jenkins:

If Church order is of divine institution, as nearly all churches believe, and if its purpose is to keep the people of God in 'the way everlasting', one of its main functions should be to help the Church strike the right balance between the witness of tradition and the power of taking new decisions in freedom, with the one enriching and not corrupting the other. Yet it has been rarely that this side of Church order has either been clearly apprehended or realized in the Church's life.²

It is in the general context of such statements that I shall be discussing, as basic components of the Church's structure, the three 'higher grades' (*sacri ordines*) of the Christian Ministry, i.e. those of

bishop, priest and deacon'.³ (Although I follow commonly accepted usage in referring to these as 'ordained ministries', I shall stress that lay Christians also are to be considered an 'order' in the Church.)⁴

The majority of Christians claim that bishops, priests and deacons are somehow essential to the completeness of the Church's structure. They can therefore legitimately be asked questions such as, 'How did these ministries arise? What is their significance? Why do they continue to exist? Why have there been radical changes over the centuries in the actual functions of the ministers belonging to these three orders? Why has the priest come to be accepted by most Christians as the normal minister of the local church? Why is their 'local church', for most purposes, not the bishop's cathedral but what is called the parish church? And why has the diaconate come to be regarded by many as little more than an apprenticeship for priesthood?'

Without necessarily attempting to answer all these questions or others of the same kind, I intend to draw attention to some examples of how changes resulting from non-theological reactions to events can greatly affect and at times distort the pattern of the Church's structures, yet scarcely receive any critical appraisal. (I do not presume to define 'the Church', but I have in mind all the mainstream Christian ecclesial bodies.) Many years have passed since Charles Gore wrote: 'Let us disentangle the essential and permanent creed, the essential and permanent organization, from the passing phase of civilization in which they have become embedded.'⁵ These words may provide some justification for this essay. Its subject, to describe it in the most general terms, is both the pattern of three 'holy orders', and also the question of how, on the basis of sound ecclesiology, bishops, priests and deacons ought to be related to one another and to the order of 'unordained' Christians. This involves a consideration and a questioning of some changes which have come about in the Church's history through its reactions to events. As A.M. Farrer pointed out, 'The Church has not canonized her history; much has happened in the course of it contrary to the direct will of God.'⁶

It seems that frequently theologians have found themselves able to ignore, or to take little account of, ecclesiological questions relating to ministerial structures *as a whole*. This neglect has often been accompanied by a concentration on one of the three orders, that of

priesthood, while at the same time the distinction between bishops and priests has been minimised, and deacons have commonly been looked upon as simply apprentice-priests. A.E. Harvey, for instance, asserted some years ago that the 'diaconate fell almost immediately into insignificance',⁷ and that for centuries in the West 'priests or presbyters ... have been regarded as expressing the essence of Christian ministry'.⁸ However, a welcome indication that the Church of England may be starting to work its way towards a better understanding is the appearance of a volume entitled, *For Such a Time as This: A Renewed Diaconate in the Church of England*. This was published in 2001 as 'A report to the General Synod of the Church of England of a Working Party of the House of Bishops'.

It is also true that a clear assertion that bishops and presbyters/priests are two distinct orders was not formally the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church when the decrees of the Council of Trent were confirmed by Pope Pius IV in 1564; a recent compendium, however, states that 'by reason of postconciliar developments, in the Latin Church there are now three sacred orders, episcopacy, presbyterate, and diaconate, including the permanent diaconate; ...'.⁹ The last two words refer to permission given by Paul VI for the ordination as so-called 'permanent'¹⁰ deacons of men, who being married, are not permitted to proceed to the priesthood. An article on 'Ordination' in a standard work of reference notes that according to the conciliar decree of Vatican II on the Church, 'deacons have imposition of hands, "not for priesthood, but for ministry" ', words which occur in ancient liturgies of ordination. The trend of this teaching is undoubtedly to confine the sacraments of Orders to bishops and priests.¹¹ Moreover it is noticeable that E. Schillebeeckx, a Roman Catholic theologian anxious to see an end to the insistence on celibacy as a condition for priesthood, is unenthusiastic in what he writes about the diaconate.¹²

In the Church of England, although many questions regarding this order were usefully discussed in a report¹³ which appeared in 1988, the need to revive a 'permanent diaconate' has not been keenly felt, largely because it is not at present an urgent practical matter. The passing of a General Synod measure in 1986 permitted the ordination of women as deacons. Many were ordained and for a few years continued as quasi-permanent deacons, but after the General Synod in 1992 voted to open the priesthood to women, most female deacons were quickly ordained

as priests. The diaconate is thus now for most women, as for most men, no more than an apprenticeship for priesthood, lasting about a year. It may be hoped, however, that the Report, *For such a time as this*, is a harbinger of change, for its sub-title is *A renewed diaconate in the Church of England*. Soon, perhaps, ordination as deacon will no longer be regarded as just a necessary stage in the process of becoming a priest. But if those who have the power to make decisions about the order of deacons do so from a perspective that is empirical rather theological, they will still not be manifesting a real concern for the completeness of the Body.

Again, priests in the Church of England, and therefore not directly affected by the decrees of Trent or of Vatican II, commonly believe and feel that they and the bishops do belong to separate orders. At the same time the relationship between priests and their bishop is not always harmonious, for it is possible, while having a 'high' view of episcopacy, to disapprove profoundly of what one's own bishop teaches or does.¹⁴ What, however, I shall argue to be most serious is the loss of a sense of the fundamentally corporate nature of the priesthood.

A distinction between the three 'holy orders' seems clearly presupposed by the Preface to the Ordinal in the *Book of Common Prayer* of 1662. It is noteworthy, however, that the preacher when deacons or priests are being ordained is instructed to declare 'the Duty and Office of such as come to be admitted Deacons [Priests]; how necessary that Order is in the Church of Christ, and also, how the people ought to esteem them in their Office.' On the other hand, the rubrics do not specify the subject of the sermon preached when a bishop is being consecrated, perhaps because not all English reformers were convinced that the episcopate was either a separate order¹⁵ or really necessary.

On account of speaking at some length about orders and ordination, I may be accused of clericalism. It is certainly the fact that the Church has at times been infected by clericalism, a debilitating disease which can sadly impair its health. Although the source of the ecclesiological error, which may have led to the disease, can be found as far back as the time of St Augustine – as will be shown in Chapter V – , let me insist at the outset that the Church ought never to think of a minister either primarily as one who holds a particular rank in Christ's army,

Holy Orders and Completeness of the Church

or as one possessing quasi-magical powers conferred on him by the performance of some quasi-magical ceremony. (In passing, let me also say that I shall not discuss charismatic ministries, for these fall outside the scope of this essay.) I shall be concentrating on the three ordained ministries, yet I intend never to forget that those in 'holy orders' do not make up the whole Body of Christ. The great majority of Christians have always been members, through their initiation, of the royal and priestly order of laity,¹⁶ and one reason why bishops, priests and deacons exist is in order that God's people may be shepherded and built up. Notwithstanding this truth, it is well known that there has been a strong tendency from mediaeval times onwards¹⁷ to equate the Body with those who have received priestly ordination, and who are then described as 'having gone into the Church'. In opposition to this, Metropolitan John Zizioulas, an Orthodox, and here consciously distancing himself from Roman Catholic theology, affirms that:

There is no episcopacy without a community attached to it.
... There is no bishop, not even for a moment or theoretically,
who is not conditioned by some community.¹⁸

It is worth noting that, in his book which compares the thought of Henri de Lubac with that of John Zizioulas, Paul McPartlan writes: 'We may say that in de Lubac's view the presence of the people is not essential for the celebration of the Eucharist.' He also states that according to de Lubac the people's *Amen* 'is not their own specific and *necessary* contribution to the eucharistic action itself, as it is for Zizioulas'.¹⁹ I shall endeavour, at any rate, to hold fast to the truth that 'holy orders' are meaningless apart from communities of Christian lay people, and to remember that 'the first Christian literature is not aware of the opposition between clerics and laity'.²⁰ At the same time I have been unable to ignore questions at the back of my mind about bishops, priests, and deacons, and the contribution which the ministry of those in each order, united to that of the others, should always be making to the completeness of the Church. Can the guidance of the Holy Spirit be justifiably claimed as the reason for all historical developments or only for some? Should those in authority have always consciously sought to act in accordance with theological principles? And if they have to some extent failed to do so, but yet have in fact been divinely guided, how much does this failure matter?

Until recently, at least, most Christian thinkers of all epochs, including those of the Reformation period, have been far from admitting that changes in Church order and ministerial structures involve no more than decisions which it is legitimate to make on a purely empirical basis, though for many they are matters which do not belong to the *esse* of Christianity. Luther could be cited as an exception, insofar as his 'idea of episcopacy was purely governmental', with the result that

every Lutheran Church decides its own form of government, and the idea that the validity of sacraments can depend upon a particular form of order is to the Lutheran mind quite incomprehensible.²¹

Anglicanism, as is shown by the Preface to the Ordinal in the *Book of Common Prayer*, has appealed to 'holy Scripture and ancient Authors' to justify its current practice; Roman Catholics and Orthodox, although not agreeing in the conclusions they draw from tradition, insist that in their following of it they have been led by the Spirit; Presbyterians, although today they do not necessarily condemn other patterns, have sought to adhere to the one which Calvin believed he could deduce from the New Testament. In spite of their different structures, these now separated Communion, as well as others which might also have been named, agree on at least two points: believing that their practice ought to be able to be shown to have a sound theological basis, they assert that it does indeed possess this; and they maintain that their own structures include more than a single ministry which can be classified as an 'order'.

Nevertheless it is indisputable that, because in the course of the centuries there have occurred changes, we now find different structures obtaining in, for example, Roman Catholicism, Orthodoxy, Anglicanism and Presbyterianism. If then it appears that, at one or more stages, changes were introduced on a purely empirical basis and without reference to theology, should it be said that those were distortions of the pattern of true development? Could some occasion in the past be shown by research to be the point at which the Church or some part of it began to go astray? This approach is attractive, for one of the most promising lines in recent ecumenical discussion has

been to return to the sources of tradition before schisms occurred. To some extent this method will be adopted in this essay, but it is necessary to be aware of its limitations. Thus, if we go back to the New Testament, we are confronted there by a notorious untidiness as regards ministries, and by judicious selection of texts the proponents of each kind of pattern can maintain that theirs is scripturally based. Starting from St Ignatius of Antioch, I hope to demonstrate that there are good reasons for uneasiness about the developments that occurred in the fourth century. Changes were no doubt inevitable at that time, but the consequences provoke questions about whether those changes were assessed theologically, and about the apparent harm they did to the completeness of the Church. And questions should be asked about what was done in other centuries also.

Furthermore, although nobody thinking about what ordained ministers do can altogether omit consideration of what they are, it is important unreservedly to accept that the basis of their activities is what God by ordination makes them to be. To start from the other end and begin with what ministers do, this can open the door to a kind of Pelagianism. 'It is ... right to assert that bishops, priests and deacons are ordained primarily to be something rather than to perform certain duties ...,' while at the same time there are some other ministries which ought simply to be described as functional – for instance a person is admitted as a reader 'to have authority to undertake the functions pertaining to that office'.²² (In Chapter VI a little more will be said about this matter.) Because of my concern not only with what ordained ministers do, but also in the first instance with what they are,²³ I shall, when speaking of them, frequently employ words which have to do with visualisation. This is in line with 'what the early Christians saw and experienced: that "the outward forms and images of the visible Church were sacramental of the inner life of the invisible and mystical Church where Christ reigned in glory."'²⁴

This approach, however, must not be misunderstood. In the history of the actual development of ministries, ordained or unordained, the functions of presiding at the Eucharist, serving, preaching, prophesying, teaching, acting as pastor and so on, were naturally being carried out before they were seen as sacramental of the Church's inner life, and before any theological meaning was attached to them. But, as I shall maintain, it was not long before bishops, priests and deacons began

to be regarded as in themselves 'signs', 'types', 'representations' or 'icons'. As such, they were not, and are not, simply functionaries, and in this sense I want to assert that they are ordained primarily to 'be', and that theologically speaking the functions they perform have their basis in what they are. Thus, anticipating what I shall seek to justify in later chapters, it should be possible in each local church to look upon the bishop as both an 'icon' of the 'oneness' of God the Father and also a 'type' of Christ the true high priest; joining with the bishop in his exercise of pastoral authority, the presbyters (or the presbyterate),²⁵ as a college, should be a visible 'representation' of Christ's apostles; and there should be deacons who can be seen as 'signs' of the diaconate of the church's Master, the One who said, 'I am among you as one who serves (literally, 'deacons').'²⁶ A pattern that facilitates the perceiving of those in holy orders as 'icons' of this kind can do much towards establishing and manifesting the completeness of the Church.

To avoid monotonous uniformity other words besides 'icon' will be used to convey more or less the same meaning, but 'representation', 'type', and so on, must not be understood in the precise sense proper to legal terms, for theology is not the exclusive preserve of canon lawyers. It is necessary at the outset to make these points clear, for one theme of this essay is the contribution to the completeness of the Church made by those in holy orders not simply or primarily through what they do, but also through what they are when regarded as 'signs'. Such an approach may be gaining ground, since the Report *For such a time as this* speaks in similar terms: 'The threefold ordained ministry, as "an outward and visible sign" of the working of divine grace through the Church, has a sacramental significance. Holy order may be seen as a "sacramental sign" of Christ's ministry in and through his Body.'²⁷

It is clear that, if what was outlined above is accepted as ecclesiologically sound, the underlying structures of the Church as found in, for example, contemporary Anglican dioceses and parishes, appear sadly distorted or defective, and consequently fail to bear witness to the completeness of the Body. But it needs at once to be added that, when we consider changes which have taken place, our concern should not be so much whether a particular development can be justified by some primitive precedent, as 'whether [it] speaks of the Gospel and the one Body'. Those words were written a good many years ago by the future archbishop Michael Ramsey, and he added:

Holy Orders and Completeness of the Church

To burrow in the New Testament for forms of ministry and imitate them is archaeological religion: to seek that form of ministry which the whole New Testament creates is the more evangelical way. And our view of the ministry had better be evangelical than archaeological.²⁸

It may be impertinent to criticise a man of Ramsey's stature for a deficiency in the book from which the above quotation is taken. Nevertheless, the truth is that, although the words quoted, together with his contention that 'the Church [is] a part of the Gospel of Christ crucified'²⁹ are of immense importance for ecclesiology and demand recognition at all times, yet it must also be said that in one respect the work is disappointing. Even though in the context of discussions in the 1930s Ramsey's natural concern was with episcopacy, on reading the book one is left with a sense that something is missing, because of the almost total absence of any reference to the diaconate. Neither this word, nor 'deacon', appear in the index. It is all too easy for Anglicans to accept the Preface to the Ordinal in the *Book of Common Prayer* which speaks of 'these Orders of Ministers in Christ's Church: Bishops, Priests, and Deacons', while in practice they treat the diaconate as virtually an irrelevance. But such neglect is bound to injure the Body, if as a mark of completeness it is meant to comprise no fewer than three ordained ministries, as well as the order of Christian laity. On Ramsey's principles, if something is missing or wrong in the sphere of holy orders, the Church's proclamation of the Gospel will be at least to some extent defective.

In what follows, then, there will be an attempt to study the ordained ministries – without forgetting the order of the laity – in the universal Church, but with attention mostly focused on the local churches. (It will emerge that there is a question as to what 'local' in this phrase means or should mean.) Amateurish as my attempt may be, it has some justification if Sykes is right in saying: 'The currently important questions of authority and *episcopate* can only be approached within the context of an ecclesiology. ... Dogmatic ecclesiology is in systematic disarray in the Churches as a whole.'³⁰ I shall maintain that the local church is meant to include the bishop, the presbyters (viewed primarily as a body rather than as individuals), and the deacons, and that these ministers have significance as 'icons' within the community to which

all Christians belong by virtue of their initiation, and which *as a whole* is, when it meets together, a particular manifestation of the world-wide Church, the Body of Christ.³¹ Whatever adaptations are required by circumstances, as of course they always have been and will be, this basic pattern needs to be recognisably maintained, not in order that we may be archaeologically correct, but for the sake of being truly evangelical through manifesting 'the fulness of Christ'.³²

In this essay I shall not examine in detail texts from the New Testament, because the evidence which they provide is notoriously inconclusive. However, although it may seem to smack of ecclesiastical archaeology, I shall devote a good deal of space to considering the years between roughly the end of the first century and the end of the fourth. As my justification for so doing, let me quote Paul McPartlan:

There is an exemplary period to which Zizioulas would direct our gaze. Its upper bound is the fourth century and it begins with the dawn of the post-apostolic age. He maintains that fundamental principles unite this period in a coherent ecclesiological witness ...³³

These words might at first sight seem to be condemned by what I have quoted from Ramsey. Zizioulas, though, approaches the subject from a different starting-point. He rejects 'the historical approach to apostolicity (which seems to have been the approach of the mediaeval Church)'.³⁴ In the same passage, a line or two further on, he speaks of the *epiclesis*, the invocation of the Holy Spirit, and says:

In an epicletical context history ceases to be in itself a guarantee for security. The *epiclesis* means ecclesialogically that the Church *asks to receive from God what she has already received historically in Christ as if she had not received it at all*, i.e. as if history did not count in itself. This includes her continuity with the apostles in all its forms.³⁵

Nevertheless, it would be wrong to be unmindful of a warning from T. Hopko:

Holy Orders and Completeness of the Church

The problem is that these apostolical and early patristic teachings, with the images used to describe the local church leaders, have come to be interpreted in a context completely different from that in which they were originally elaborated.³⁶

To these quotations may be added a sentence penned by Sykes, 'Processes in the Church cannot be turned into the equivalent of revelation.'³⁷ In rather the same vein are some remarks of Schillebeeckx:

To the theologian, the actual practice of Christians and Christian communities is, for the time being, simply a possible sign of faith; he or she investigates whether it is a real sign of faith. ... No practice of any kind is legitimated solely by itself. Only theological theory can demonstrate whether the direction of the practice is *orthos*, right (*orthopraxis*), in the light of the inspiration and orientation of the great Christian tradition, even if this practice should be completely new.³⁸

We ought then to bear in mind these various points made by Ramsey, Zizioulas, Hopko, Sykes and Schillebeeckx, and seek to find the right method of learning useful lessons from the past, as we look at the ways in which the Church has at different times regarded and used the ordained ministries.

I must state now that, although I shall frequently cite Zizioulas, from whom I, like many others, have learnt a very great deal, I do not wish to give the impression that I approach matters with the same concerns as he does, or on the basis of his special interests. Furthermore, in future chapters I shall also quote a great deal from Gregory Dix, of whose works I shall make much use, but it must be recognised that, particularly in his contribution to *The Apostolic Ministry*, he was writing with a purpose very different from my present one.

Let me here insist again that the questions posed in this chapter must not be understood as implying that I regard all changes as having been changes for the worse. Indeed the next two chapters deal with the origins of what I hold to be the classical pattern of ordained ministries, a structure which superseded the unorganized conditions that obtained in New Testament times. In Chapter IV I do indeed examine critically

the changes which took place in the fourth century, because I think it can be shown that these were distortions of the earlier pattern and not the 'the steady unfolding of its inner reality'.³⁹ The criterion by which changes ought to be assessed is whether they contribute to, or detract from, the completeness of the Church. And when this completeness is being considered, theologians should be ready to take account of the 'iconic' aspect of those in holy orders. By failing to do this, they lay themselves open to the charge implicit in the words, 'in the West ecclesiology has become an impersonal, juridical system.'⁴⁰

The approach which I call 'iconic' is not the only way in which one can think of the ordained ministries as needed for the completeness of the Church. A different, but complementary, approach is suggested by another word which I use quite frequently, 'structure'. Here the concept is taken from the body, and its significance was well brought out by Hans Urs von Balthasar:

To give it its proper degree of importance in the Church, the ministry is in fact by no means a kind of 'foreign ministry' for the Church; we could rather compare it to the skeleton which enables a living organism to walk upright, and though rigid itself, gives flexibility to the rest and is wholly concealed within the living body.⁴¹

For anyone willing to think along these lines, and for the time being to abandon an 'iconic' approach, it remains important to understand what bishops, presbyters and deacons are, before addressing oneself to matters concerning ministerial functions. Von Balthasar's implied warning must also be taken very seriously, for if 'the skeleton' becomes distorted, the power of the Body 'to walk upright' will be impaired. I shall be suggesting that some changes did indeed have this effect.

I may be criticised for having had, while writing, two aims which are often thought to be mutually incompatible, for I have sought both to give a sketch of historical developments in the light of ecclesiology, and also at the same time to suggest tentatively how lessons from the past might be applied to the situation of the Anglican and other Churches to-day. In response to this criticism, I simply pose two questions: why should theology be thought respectable when it is divorced from the actual life of Christian communities ? and why should members of

these communities be allowed to assume that theology is a subject with little relevance to their life?

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1. J-M.R. Tillard, *Church of Churches, the Ecclesiology of Communion*, p. 248.
 2. *Tradition and the Spirit*, London, 1951, p. 82.
 3. *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, 'Holy Orders', p. 782.
 4. Cf. 'It has been said that it is reasonable to suppose that the laying on of hands associated with Christian Initiation was intended to symbolise both ordination to the ministerial priesthood of the laity, and also coronation in the kingly office of those appointed to share in the Kingship of Christ.' (D. Hope, 'Liturgy – the work of the people?', in *All Are Called – Towards a Theology of the Laity*, p. 49).
 5. *The Church and the Ministry*, (new edition, revised by C.H. Turner), London, 1919, p. 9.
 6. Foreword (1957) to *The Apostolic Ministry*, p. vi.
 7. A.E. Harvey, *Priest or President?* p. 15.
 8. *Ibid.*, p. 17. Similarly R. Greenwood on p. 6 of *Transforming Priesthood* speaks of 'ordained ministry' as if it were virtually the same as priesthood.
 9. According to Trent Session XXIII, cap. 2 there are three major orders, priests, deacons and sub-deacons, but cap. 4 states that bishops, as having the power to confirm and ordain, are superior to presbyters (H. Denzinger, ed. A. Schönmetzer *Encheiridion* ..., Freiburg-i-Br., 1965, p. 412f.); *Documents on the Liturgy 1963–1979*, Collegeville, Minnesota, 1982, p. 779.) On pp. 30 and 60 of *Authority in the Church: A Challenge for Anglicans*, G.R. Evans discusses the matter, also giving instances of Anglicans who held bishops and priests to be of the same order.
 10. 'Permanent' is inappropriate, because it *assumes* that normally a deacon is an apprentice priest.
 11. *A Catholic Dictionary of Theology*, III, p. 364.
 12. E. Schillebeeckx, *The Church with a Human Face*, p. 265f.
 13. *Deacons in the Ministry of the Church – A Report commissioned by the House of Bishops* (GS 802). This was written by the then bishop of Portsmouth with two co-authors (p. 3). In 1998 it received an appreciative mention in a short background paper, *The Diaconate* (GSMisc 535), which itself states in its concluding paragraph that 'a review of the diaconate would be timely'.
 14. Cf. Chapter VII, p. 123, n. 27.
 15. The Report of Archbishops' Group on the Episcopate (*Episcopal Ministry*), notes that 'Archbishop Whitgift speaks of "an equality" of bishops and priests *quoad ministerium*, "in their ministry" (Whitgift, *Works* III, 535-6)' (p. 30. n. 19), and states that the 1550 Ordinal, 'speaks of "ordering" in relation to the diaconate and presbyterate, but "consecrating" for the episcopate. ... In 1662 "ordaining or" were inserted before "consecrating" in the title of the rite for the episcopate...' (p. 86). *Episcopal Ministry* also says that 'the words "for the office and work of a priest" (or "bishop") were added to the Ordinal in 1662, so as to underline the distinction between priest and bishop which was being challenged by the Presbyterians.' (p. 106).
 16. It is relevant here to quote St Leo I, who in Sermon IV, after having mentioned his own special ministry also said, 'The signing with the cross makes kings of all who have been born again in Christ, and the Holy Spirit's anointing consecrates them priests' (*Omnes enim in Christo regeneratos crucis signum efficit reges, Spiritus sancti unctio consecrat sacerdotes*), SC 200, Léon le Grand, *Sermons* (ed. R.

- Dolle), Paris, 1973, p. 266.
17. But in the twelfth century Guerric could still say: '[The priest] does not offer the sacrifice alone, he does not consecrate alone, but the entire assembly of the faithful standing there consecrates with him, offers the sacrifice with him.' (*De purificatione B.V.M., Sermo 5, PL 185, 87*).
 18. John D. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 137.
 19. P. McPartlan, *The Eucharist Makes The Church*, pp. 104, 114 [his italics].
 20. J.-M.R. Tillard, *Church of Churches, The Ecclesiology of Communion*, p. 211.
 21. K.D. Mackenzie, 'Sidelights from the Non-episcopal Communion,' in *The Apostolic Ministry*, p. 468f. *Episcopal Ministry* (p. 66–72) includes an interesting section on the understanding of episcopacy in the Lutheran Churches.
 22. H.J.M. Turner, 'Ordination and Vocation', in *Order and Ministry*, (ed. C. Hall and R. Hannaford), Leominster, 1996, p. 126. I find it hard to see why S. Sykes describes as '*radically unclear*' [my italics] the distinction 'between ontological and functional understandings of the priesthood.' (*Unashamed Anglicanism*, p.198, n. 18)
 23. I find it encouraging that there are signs of a movement in this direction. Thus, in the course of his address to the Diocesan Synod on 13 March 2004, the Bishop of Chelmsford, J. W. Gladwin, said: 'Ordination is moving from a focus on function, and recovering a sense of the character of the order itself – deacon, priest/presbyter, bishop.'
 24. B. Horne, 'The Republic, the Hierarchy, and the Trinity: a theology of order', in *Order and Ministry*, p. 18, quoting G. Bennett, 'The Bishop as a Focus of Unity', *To the Church of England* (Churchman Publishing, 1988), p. 157.
 25. In the next chapter an explanation will be given both for the use of 'presbyter' instead of the more familiar 'priest', and for treating 'presbyterate' as a collective noun.
 26. Lk 22: 27 (R.S.V.) Cf. 'Deacons represent to the Church its calling as servant in the world', *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*, WCC, 1982, M 31, quoted in *For such a time as this*, p. 16.
 27. *For such a time as this*, p. 30.
 28. A.M. Ramsey, *The Gospel and the Catholic Church*, p. 69. R. Greenwood quoted Ramsey's words in *Transforming Priesthood*, p. 192.
 29. *Ibid.*, p. vi, Preface to the First Edition.
 30. *Unashamed Anglicanism*, London, 1995, p. xix. Cf. R. Greenwood, *op. cit.*, p. 66: 'The Church of England's present critical circumstances ... illustrate all too clearly the results of attempting to live pragmatically with no publicly defined vision of church and ministry.'
 31. Cf. 'According to the teaching of the New Testament each local congregation of Christians is the church universal in all its fulness.' (G.B. Caird, *The Revelation of St John the Divine*, London, 1966, p. 24, commenting on Rev 1:12.)
 32. Eph 4:14. Cf. also Eph 1: 23, which is particularly important if the right translation is, 'the church, which is [Christ's] body, that which is filled by him who is always being filled [sc. by God]'. (J.A.T. Robinson, *The Body*, London, 1952, p. 68f., citing a suggestion made by W.L. Knox, *St Paul and the Church of the Gentiles*, Cambridge, 1939, p. 186.)
 33. P. McPartlan, *The Eucharist Makes The Church*, p. 200, referring to Zizioulas' article 'Episkopé and Episkopos in the Early Church', in *Episkopé and Episcopate in Ecumenical Perspective*, Faith and Order Paper 102, Geneva, 1980. S. Sykes, *op. cit.*, p. 161, refers approvingly to the same article.
 34. *Being as Communion*, p. 185.

Holy Orders and Completeness of the Church

35. Ibid., with Zizioulas' italics. Cf. G.D. Fee's comment on *Phil.* 1. 19: 'For Paul the resident Spirit is ever being given or "supplied" anew in the believer's or community's life.' (*Paul's Letter to the Philippians*, Michigan, 1995, p. 134, n. 34)
36. 'On Ecclesial Conciliarity', in *The Legacy of St Vladimir*, p. 220f.
37. S. Sykes, *Unashamed Anglicanism*, p. 131.
38. E. Schillebeeckx, *The Church with a Human Face*, p. 11.
39. This phrase, which expresses a concept of much importance for my argument, comes from an article by E. Duffy about the papacy, and appears in a more extended quotation in Chapter VII, p. 117.
40. D. Staniloae, *Theology and the Church*, Crestwood, 1980, p. 107.
41. *Engagement with God* (trans. J. Halliburton), London, 1975, p. 91.

II IGNATIUS: A STRUCTURE OF MINISTRIES

One may agree with the statement quoted from Zizioulas towards the end of the last chapter that history is not ‘in itself a guarantee for security’, and nevertheless consider it important to try to learn from history. And for our present purpose, to repeat words also quoted, ‘there is an exemplary period to which Zizioulas would direct our gaze. Its upper bound is the fourth century and it begins with the dawn of the post-apostolic age.’¹ This justifies the attention about to be given to the letters of St Ignatius, bishop of Antioch, written *circa* A.D. 110.² Here is the earliest surviving evidence of monepiscopacy, with the bishop, the presbyters and the deacons referred to as three clearly distinct orders. Moreover Ignatius opens up another subject mentioned in the first chapter, for he assumes that members of these orders are in some sense ‘types’, ‘representations’, or ‘icons’.

Thus according to Ignatius the bishop, who as one man embodies in himself all the members of the local church of which he is head,³ ‘presides as a representation of God’.⁴ Similarly he can be described as ‘a representation of the Father’,⁵ and all who belong to his church are to ‘follow [him] as Jesus Christ followed the Father’.⁶ However the bishop can also in a sense correspond to Christ, since Ignatius tells the Romans that, because of his impending martyrdom, ‘only Jesus Christ and your love will be bishop’ of the church of Antioch.⁷ Similarly, living as a Christian means being subject to the bishop as to Jesus Christ,⁸ while anyone who does anything without informing the bishop is a servant of the Devil.⁹ The supreme importance of the bishop is strongly emphasised: neither may baptism be administered nor a

love-feast held apart from him,¹⁰ and to be valid the Eucharist must be presided over by him or by one whom he designates.¹¹

Before mentioning the deacons, Ignatius often has a reference to the presbyters, or to the presbyterate¹² as a body, and specially associates them with the bishop. Accordingly he writes: 'your deservedly famous presbyterate, which is worthy of God, is attuned to the bishop as its strings to a lyre.'¹³ In *Magnesians* two individual presbyters, Bassus and Apollonius are named,¹⁴ but Ignatius' more frequent use of the collective noun 'presbyterate', instead of the simple plural 'presbyters', is significant in that it indicates that for him there is something essentially corporate about this office. As a body the presbyters are to be respected 'as a council of God and as a college of the apostles',¹⁵ and thus the Trallians are bidden to be 'subject to the presbyterate, as to the apostles of Jesus Christ'.¹⁶ Similarly Zotion, as a deacon, is subject not only to the bishop but also to the presbyterate, 'as to the law of Jesus Christ'.¹⁷ Again, in Magnesia the presbyters, mentioned between the bishop and the deacons, are described 'as a representation of the council (*synedrion*) of the apostles',¹⁸ and conversely the apostles are called 'the Church's presbyterate'.¹⁹ Less theologically, the presbyterate is termed 'a fitly wreathed spiritual crown'.²⁰ Moreover, and this is one reason for transliterating the word instead of rendering it by the English 'priest', it is clear that Ignatius did not envisage the presbyters as individuals who normally exercised what might be termed the specifically 'priestly' function of presiding at the Eucharist. We may suppose, though, that when the bishop found it necessary to designate someone other than himself to preside, he would usually choose a presbyter.

Current Orthodox liturgical texts, when they refer to priests and deacons, sometimes use collective nouns for both orders, 'the honourable presbyterate [and] the diaconate in Christ'.²¹ However, although as we have seen Ignatius uses the word 'presbyterate' when speaking of presbyters (priests), in the same way as is done in *I Timothy* 4. 14, he never employs any comparable collective expression when mentioning deacons. This strongly suggests that for Ignatius the ministry of a presbyter was essentially one shared with his fellow-members in the local church's presbyterate, which under one aspect included the bishop,²² but the ministry of diaconate was one exercised by each individual deacon.

Ignatius mentions several deacons by name, and it is clear that he held the diaconate in high esteem: on four occasions he, a bishop, refers to a single deacon as his 'fellow-servant', using the plural of the same word when he mentions a group of them.²³ Moreover he describes them as 'most dear to me, having been entrusted with the diaconate of Jesus Christ',²⁴ an example of his employing the word 'diaconate' not as a collective but as an abstract noun. The Trallians are reminded that the deacons 'are not deacons of meats and drinks but servants of the Church of God',²⁵ and that all should respect them 'as Jesus Christ'.²⁶ Although according to Lightfoot's translation of the introductory paragraph of the letter to the Philadelphians Ignatius seems to have styled the deacons, but not the presbyters, as 'having been appointed according to the mind of Jesus Christ', the fact that Ignatius used the definite article only once before 'presbyters' and 'deacons' renders it more probable that the phrase really applies to both.²⁷ While the Smyrnaeans are told to 'follow the bishop as Jesus Christ followed the Father, and the presbyterate as the apostles', they are to 'respect the deacons as God's commandment'.²⁸

Incidentally, in his letter to the Roman church Ignatius mentions neither bishop, presbyter nor deacon, but we shall see that this cannot be taken as evidence that there were no ordained ministers there. Anyhow, in the churches of the region which Ignatius knew best the ministerial pattern is: one bishop, a corporate or collective presbyterate, and several individual deacons. How did this 'Ignatian' pattern come to exist?

A possible way of accounting for it has been given by B.J. Capper, in his chapter contributed to a recent book.²⁹ Having investigated the actual sizes of larger houses at Pompeii and Herculaneum, he concludes that the principal room in these might have provided space for not more than two or three dozen in which to meet, while their courtyards, open to the elements, might have accommodated a gathering of up to two hundred people. Capper therefore holds that in early days 'the Christian community in a city will normally have met in groups of two dozen or so within its larger households. Occasionally all within the city will have gathered together in the courtyard of a grander house to hear major visitors or for major deliberations ...'³⁰ (Might this have been what St Paul describes in *I Corinthians* 14:23 as a meeting of 'the whole church'?) Capper holds that in the small

meetings the householder will have presided as host, assisted by his slaves or others to serve the meal in the course of which the Eucharist was celebrated. Dix, however, might have wished Capper to distinguish between the origins of 'the bishop's "liturgy" of teaching' for which he was 'sitting upon the throne', and 'that of priesthood ... fulfilled away from the throne and [when he was] standing at the altar'.³¹ By the time of Ignatius, Capper thinks, the little house-groups in a city had come normally to meet together as a single unit for the Eucharist, perhaps to ensure doctrinal orthodoxy. Those who had as householders been hosts to the small groups, now formed a council of elders (presbyters), and one of them, or perhaps 'a renowned local teacher or prophet', became the regular president at the Eucharist, Ignatius' bishop.³²

A development of this kind, Capper claims, accounts for the fact that 'Ignatius makes the bishops, deacons and elders (given in this order), respectively, images of God, Christ and the apostles.'³³ This would have resulted from the insertion of the elders into a pattern which had originally been that of 'the pair of offices of the meal president and the deacons who served the meal – pictures of God seated in majesty, and Christ humbly serving humanity through the meal which was his body.' Capper's claim, however, depends too much on a single instance in Ignatius where deacons are mentioned before presbyters, a passage in which actually the order is deacons, bishop, presbyters.³⁴ Reasonable as appears the suggestion concerning the way in which the threefold ministry may have come into being, it cannot find any real support in the letters of Ignatius, from which after all we can discover nothing about ministries at Antioch before he became bishop. One is entitled only to say that Ignatius does tend to think of the presbyters collectively, and through doing so he finds it natural twice to compare them explicitly with 'the college of the apostles'.

Whatever the process of development – and 'perhaps there was a variety of causes'³⁵ as a result of which the three orders reached the respective positions which they hold in the letters of Ignatius – , what must be emphasised is that his letters show how for him the members of the three holy orders were not merely functionaries but had in themselves an 'iconic' significance: a close connection existed between their functions and what they simply were. In Chapter VI more will be said about this; at present let us just note it, together with the fact that

for Ignatius, not only the community of God's people, the laity, but also bishops, presbyters and deacons were essential.³⁶ In these ministers, moreover, he found theological and 'iconic'³⁷ significance, as is shown by the examples which I have given.

This structure of the community was manifested when 'the Church as a body, Christ's body, offered the Eucharist, led by its officers'.³⁸ Thus Zizioulas, basing himself chiefly on Ignatius, wrote:

In the center of the *synaxis* of the 'whole Church' and behind the 'one altar' there was the throne of the 'one bishop' seated 'in the place of God' or understood as the living 'image of Christ'. Around his throne were seated the presbyters, while by him stood the deacons helping him in the celebration, and in front of him the 'people of God', the order of the Church which was constituted by virtue of the rite of initiation (baptism-chrismation) and considered the *sine qua non* condition for the eucharistic community to exist and express the Church's unity.

A fundamental function of this 'one bishop' was to express in himself the 'multitude' (πολυπλήθεια) of the faithful in that place. ... He was the one in whom the 'many' united would become 'one' ...³⁹

As might be expected of an Orthodox, Zizioulas appreciates that the bishop in Ignatius is seen as an 'icon' focusing the presence of God or of Christ; it was perhaps through not appreciating the way in which for the Orthodox an icon functions as a kind of sacrament that Greenwood wrote:

Within a particular eucharistic community, the ordained minister may be spoken of as having an assigned 'place', though not in a rigid or juridical manner to represent God, as though God were himself absent.⁴⁰

These words reveal how easy it is to misunderstand language about 'representation', which may be derived from Ignatius, but which is used in a culture with different presuppositions – for Ignatius God's

presence is focused in the bishop, in the way that an icon focuses the presence of the person or mystery which it portrays.

An approach different from that of Zizioulas can be found in another Orthodox theologian, the Russian N. Afanassieff, who also insisted on the eucharistic context of Ignatius' language. Citing *Luke* 22:27, Afanassieff maintained that as well as presiding at the Last Supper, Christ there also undertook the role of a servant ('deacon'), and on this basis he wrote:

It would be wrong to wish to confine Christ's 'diakonia' just to the foot-washing, which the synoptics do not mention. During the Holy Supper Christ had really been 'he who serves' as John had previously been.⁴¹

Moreover, according to Afanassieff, in Ignatius' understanding of the Eucharist, 'the deacons fulfilled the "diakonia" which Christ had undertaken during the Supper: they were the "servants" there. That is what Ignatius meant when he required that the deacons should be respected "as God's commandment", having in mind Christ's injunctions in *Mark* 10:43.'⁴² At the same time Christ had of course also presided at the Last Supper, and in this capacity the bishop for Ignatius 'occupied the central place' at the Eucharist,⁴³ and was accordingly 'the image of the invisible Bishop'.⁴⁴ Afanassieff holds that for Ignatius 'the presbyters who constituted a Senate (*hōs syndésmon*) ... occupied the apostles' place in the Eucharistic assembly.'⁴⁵

We may well find Afanassieff's depiction attractive, but there are difficulties about it. An objector, approaching 'iconic' concepts from a literal-minded standpoint, could say that Ignatius, if he really pictured Christ in the Upper Room as having been both host and servant, ought to have dismissed the deacons as superfluous, since the bishop was fulfilling both roles. A similar objection is that if for Ignatius the presbyters collectively 'represented' the apostles, and thus it was presbyters whom he equated with the actual recipients of the Bread and Wine at the Last Supper, should he not have realised that this involved him in depriving lay communicants of any Scriptural prototypes? Anyhow, Zizioulas provides a more satisfactory picture. It ought, perhaps, also to be repeated here that Ignatius more often writes as though he regarded the bishop as the 'representation' of God or of the

Father rather than of Christ. This fact, some years before Afanassieff or Zizioulas wrote, Dix had already noticed and he explained it by saying that for the early Church the bishop on his throne, presiding over the assembly and delivering inspired teaching, represented the Father, whereas his liturgy at the altar invited comparison with the office of the Son.⁴⁶ Furthermore, it is of interest that others besides Orthodox and Anglo-Catholics are willing to regard the bishop 'iconically', for the evangelical, Michael Green, concluded a paragraph in which he cited Ignatius by saying:

In short, *episkopé* belongs supremely to God the Holy Trinity. He shares it (without surrendering it) with the church, and with its ministers in particular. The one bishop embodies in his own person the oversight of God.⁴⁷

We must not at this point pause to discuss further the 'iconic' interpretation given by Afanassieff. (It is worth remembering that, although undoubtedly he made a great contribution to ecclesiological thought, some of his views have been cogently criticised by Zizioulas.)⁴⁸ In the next chapter I shall have to consider Afanassieff's insistence that at the Last Supper Christ both presided and also acted as servant. For the moment I am simply concerned with Ignatius and with the fact that he did locate the bishop, the presbyterate, the deacons and the laity in a theological framework. Ignatius' strong emphasis on the bishop may lead one to suspect that he knew that some Christians held different views and were opposed to moniscopacy.⁴⁹ Whether or not this was the case, G.R. Evans rightly observed that 'he stresses the importance of the community's thinking and acting as one with their bishop. This is a free co-operation of those who are of "one mind" and share "one hope"'.⁵⁰

This mention of the community appropriately introduces an important point which needs always to be remembered, and which Dix made when he wrote:

In the idea of Ignatius, and of the primitive writers generally, it is *the church as a whole*, and not any one order in it, which not so much 'represents' as 'is' Christ on earth.⁵¹

Although he does not provide any specific references, Dix is probably right in this assertion, and, if so, this means that Ignatius could distinguish between on the one hand the whole Church as it actually is in itself, and on the other hand its ministers as 'types' or 'representations' within it. Moreover, from another angle, he could see the bishop as embodying in himself all the members of the local church of which he is head, including therefore those ministering as presbyters and deacons, together with those baptized into the 'order of laity'. At the same time, Ignatius also must have seen the bishop as in a sense standing over against the presbyterate, just as Jesus Christ stood over against the twelve apostles, whom he chose to be the judges of the new Israel (*Luke* 22:30). These examples of fluidity are mentioned, not in order to increase, but to lessen, the intellectual difficulties felt by any who are tempted to criticise Ignatius on account of what seem to be his failures to be self-consistent. Such criticisms may well be a result both of ignoring the points to which Dix drew attention, and also of not appreciating that, although 'icons' convey theological truth, they are poetic images and not to be treated by the literal-minded as symbols of the same nature as those used in algebra. Apparent inconsistencies in the 'iconography' of Ignatius can of course be matched by similar variations in imagery found in the Bible: thus in the Pauline writings, the Church is in one place stated to be Christ's body (*I Cor* 12:12 - 27), in another his bride (*Eph* 5:25 - 32), and in a third the temple of God (*I Cor* 4:16).

Grateful as the Church ought to be for all that it has received from Ignatius, it is true that he does in places express himself in ways which some today are liable to find uncongenial, perhaps partly because of the strong tendency of many modern people to be suspicious when they perceive that authority is being asserted.⁵² Yet, whatever our hesitations or criticisms, we must never ignore the significance of the fact that, without being unfaithful to the Christian tradition as he had received it, Ignatius insisted that bishop, presbyters, and deacons should be accepted as essential constituents of the structure of the Church. The concept of structure is implicit in von Balthasar's comparison of 'the ministry' with 'the skeleton which enables a living organism to walk upright'.⁵³ This comparison would have been approved by Ignatius, but he would also have required that ministers should be viewed 'iconically'. It seems clear, too, that when he wrote in support of his

convictions, he could reasonably hope that the Christians whom he was addressing would be persuaded by his letters to agree with him, even if hitherto they had thought otherwise. The extent to which subsequently the Church has been faithful to, or has abandoned, the underlying 'Ignatian structure' and its 'iconography' – these are matters which will come up for discussion in later chapters.

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1. Cf. for this emphasis on the post-apostolic age, J.H. Newman, 'The highest and most wonderful truths, though communicated once for all by inspired teachers, could not be comprehended all at once by the recipients ...', *An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine* (edited and introduced by J.M. Cameron), Penguin Classics, 1974, p. 90.
 2. The exact date is uncertain.
 3. *Ephesians* I, 3 – τὴν πολυπλήθειαν ὑμῶν ... ἀπειλήφα ἐν Ὁνησίμῳ ... ὑμῶν ... ἐπισκόπῳ; cf. *Magnesians* II, 1, where with different wording Ignatius speaks of a group comprising the bishop, two presbyters and a deacon. It is interesting that πολυπλήθεια recurs in *Episcopal Ministry*, p. 9, with a reference to V. Lossky, *Mystical Theology in the Eastern Church* (tr. London, 1957).
 4. *Magnesians* VI, 1 – προκαθημένου τοῦ ἐπισκόπου εἰς τύπον Θεοῦ, and cf. *Magnesians* II, 1 where the deacon Zotion is commended for being subject to the bishop 'as to the grace of God'. For Zotion's subjection to the presbyterate, see below. Though not wholly satisfactory, 'representation' seems to me the best rendering of τύπος, which others translate as 'image' or 'likeness'.
 5. *Trallians* III, 1 – ἐπίσκοπον ὄντα τύπον τοῦ Πατρός.
 6. *Smyrnaeans* VIII, 1 – πάντες τῷ ἐπισκόπῳ ἀκολουθεῖτε, ὡς Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς τῷ Πατρί. (In *Episcopal Ministry*, Appendix III, p. 308, G. Carey, then Bishop of Bath and Wells, wrote a paragraph about Ignatius and cited the phrases quoted in this sentence.)
 7. *Romans* IX, 1 – μόνος αὐτὴν Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς ἐπισκοπήσει καὶ ἡ ὑμῶν ἀγάπη.
 8. *Trallians* II, 1 – ὅταν ... τῷ ἐπισκόπῳ ὑποτάσσησθε ὡς Ἰησοῦ Χριστῷ.
 9. *Smyrnaeans* IX, 1 – ὁ λαβρα ἐπισκόπου τι πράσσω τῷ διαβόλῳ λατρεῖν.
 10. *Smyrnaeans* VIII, 2 – οὐκ ἐξόν ἐστιν χωρὶς τοῦ ἐπισκόπου οὔτε βαπτίζειν οὔτε ἀγάπην ποιεῖν.
 11. *Smyrnaeans* VIII, 1 – ἐκείνη βέβαια εὐχαριστία ἡγείσθω ἡ ὑπὸ τὸν ἐπίσκοπον οὔσα, ἣ ὧ ἂν αὐτὸς ἐπιτρέψῃ. G. Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy*, p. 21, n. 3, points out that 'the bishop or his delegate is not yet thought of as the "celebrant" of the eucharist, which is the act of the whole church "under" the presidency of the bishop'.
 12. 'Presbyterate' should strictly speaking be used to denote the office held by a presbyter, with 'presbytery' for a body of presbyters. The Greek word πρεσβυτέριον has both meanings, and for convenience I use 'presbyterate' similarly, both for the body of office-holders and for the office.
 13. *Ephesians* IV, 1 – τὸ γὰρ ἀξιονόμαστον ὑμῶν πρεσβυτέριον, τοῦ Θεοῦ ἄξιον, οὕτως συνήρμους τῷ ἐπισκόπῳ ὡς χορδαὶ κιθάρα.
 14. *Magnesians* II, 1.
 15. *Trallians* III, 1 – τοὺς δὲ πρεσβυτέρους ὡς συνέδριον Θεοῦ καὶ [ὡς] σύνδεσμον ἀποστόλων. Further references to *synedrion* will be found in Chapters IV and VI.
 16. *Trallians* II, 2 – τῷ πρεσβυτέρῳ, ὡς [τοῖς] ἀποστόλοις Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ.
 17. *Magnesians* II, 1 – τῷ πρεσβυτέρῳ ὡς νόμῳ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ.
 18. *Magnesians* VI, 1 – τῶν πρεσβυτέρων εἰς τύπον συνεδρίου τῶν ἀποστόλων.

Holy Orders and Completeness of the Church

19. *Philadelphians* V, 1 – τοῖς ἀποστόλοις ὡς πρεσβυτερίῳ ἐκκλησίας.
20. *Magesians* XIII, 1 – ἀξιοπλόκου πνευματικοῦ στεφάνου τοῦ πρεσβυτερίου.
21. ὑπὲρ ... τοῦ τιμίου πρεσβυτερίου, τῆς ἐν Χριστῷ διακονίας ...
22. Cf. *Ephesians* XX, 1 – εἰς τὸ ὑπακούειν ἡμᾶς τῷ ἐπισκόπῳ καὶ τῷ πρεσβυτερίῳ.
23. σύνδουλος – *Ephesians* II, 1, *Magesians* II, 1, *Philadelphians* IV, 1, *Smyrnaeans* XII, 2.
24. *Magesians* VI, 1 – τῶν διακόνων τῶν ἐμοὶ γλυκυτάτων, πεπιστευμένων διακονίαν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ.
25. *Trallians* II, 3 – ἐκκλησία Θεοῦ ὑπηρεταί.
26. *Trallians* III, 1.
27. *Philadelphians* introduction – τοῖς σὺν αὐτῷ (the bishop) πρεσβυτέροις καὶ διακόνοις ἀποδεδειγμένοις ἐν γνώμῃ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ.
28. *Smyrnaeans* VIII, 1. For a valuable discussion of Ignatius' references to deacons, see J.N. Collins, *Diakonia*, O.U.P., 1990, p. 239–241.
29. 'Order and Ministry in the Social Pattern of the New Testament church', in *Order and Ministry* p. 64. Cf. *I Cor* 16:19, on which C.K. Barrett commented, 'Unless we are to think that the whole Christian community in Ephesus was small enough to meet in one house, we must suppose that there were several churches in the city.' (*The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, London, 1968, p. 396); cf. also G. Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy*, p. 22f., on the adaptation of large Roman private houses for Christian worship.
30. Capper, op. cit., p. 64.
31. G. Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy*, p. 31. Notice that teaching is one of the *bishop's* liturgies – cf. Chapter VIII, p. 141, n. 22.
32. Capper, op. cit., p. 66f.
33. *Magesians* VI cited by Capper because, presumably, although the presbyters come before the deacons, the bishop presides εἰς τύπον Θεοῦ, and the presbyters εἰς τύπον συνεδρίου τῶν ἀποστόλων; in *Trallians* III, the other passage cited, and in which as stated in the text, the presbyters are to be respected ὡς συνέδριον Θεοῦ καὶ [ὡς] συνέδριον ἀποστόλων.
34. Capper, op. cit., p. 66f.
35. A.M. Ramsey, *The Gospel and the Catholic Church*, p. 77.
36. *Trallians* III, 1 – χωρὶς τούτων ἐκκλησία οὐ καλεῖται, where 'these' may refer to presbyters only as those last named, or to presbyters in connection with deacons and the bishop, who are also mentioned in the sentence.
37. Cf. Ignatius' use of τύπος in *Magesians* VI, 1, quoted in n. 28, and also in *Trallians* III, 1. For an example of the bringing of τύπος and εἰκὼν together, cf. ἔστι ... ἡ ἁγία ἐκκλησία τύπος, ὡς εἴρηται, καὶ εἰκὼν τοῦ μὲν Θεοῦ ..., Maximus the Confessor, *Mystagogia* 24, PG 91, 705A.
38. J.M. Barnett, *The Diaconate – A Full and Equal Order*, p. 99.
39. *Being as Communion*, pp. 152f. He gives references mainly to Ignatius (but also to some other writers) for the words within quotation marks, apart from 'the whole Church' where the reference is to what he has already written. For the importance of the *one* bishop, cf., 'Comparable perhaps only to the realm of mathematics, 'One' is, in this kingdom, the ground and the ultimate mystery and purpose of all things.' (M. Barth, *The Broken Wall – A Study of the Epistle to the Ephesians*, London, 1960, p. 238) On πολυπλήθεια see the reference in n.3 above.
40. R. Greenwood, *Transforming Priesthood*, p. 153.
41. N. Afanassieff, *L'Eglise du Saint-Esprit*, p. 251f.
42. Op. cit., p. 257, ref. *Smyrnaeans* VIII, 1.
43. Op. cit., p. 257.

44. Op. cit., p. 318.
45. Op. cit., p. 257, ref. *Trallians* III, 1.
46. G. Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy*, p. 31f. *Episcopal Ministry*, speaking of how the Orthodox see the bishop, states, 'He is a *patriarch*, or image of the Father and the incarnate Son.' (p. 44)
47. M. Green, *Freed to Serve*, p. 52.
48. John D. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, pp. 23ff., 132f.
49. In the opinion of W.L. Knox: 'Ignatius's zeal for the episcopate is due not to its being a novelty, but to the fact that it is the only bond of unity between local churches and in each local church itself against the disruptive tendencies of those who claim to be πνευματικοί.' *The Acts of the Apostles*, Cambridge, 1948, p. 98f., n.1.
50. G.R. Evans, *Authority in the Church: a challenge for Anglicans*, p.27, citing *Magnesians* VII.
51. *The Shape of the Liturgy*, p. 29 – his italics. Cf. J.M. Barnett, quoted above.
52. E. Schillebeeckx, in *The Church with a Human Face*, recognised that for Ignatius the bishop, the presbyters and the deacons 'are the earthly type of a heavenly prototype or model,' but was clearly unhappy about the fact that 'this system of authority and subjection – hierarchy – thus receives a theological and christological, ideological substructure.' (pp. 70f.)
53. Chapter I, p. 21, n. 41.

III OTHER CONTRIBUTORS, AND THE 'IGNATIAN' STRUCTURE

Because Ignatius is the earliest author to recognise episcopate, presbyterate and diaconate as *three* separate holy orders, I began with him, but in so doing I bypassed two other documents which require mention: the *First Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians (I Clement)*, dated about AD 96, and thus some years before the epistles of Ignatius; and the *Didache*, a work concerning which 'opinions differ as to where and when it was written, though there is a generally cautious agreement that it dates from the latter part of the first century and may have been written in Syria.'¹

Tradition identifies the author of *I Clement* as St Clement, the third successor of St Peter, but the writer of this letter, sent on behalf of the church in Rome to the Corinthian church, does not claim to be a bishop. In this connection it may be relevant to point out that no bishop is mentioned in Ignatius' letter to the Roman church. Indeed,

everything we know about the Church at Rome in its first century or so points ... to a community which certainly thought of itself as one Church, but which was in practice a loose and often divided federation of widely different communities ...²

Clement's letter is a protest against the deposition from office of some presbyters at Corinth. He knows only two orders of ministers: the deacons, and those whom he sometimes styles bishops and sometimes presbyters. These, in virtue of one of their distinctive functions, are

described by Clement as ‘those who offered the gifts’,³ that is, they were celebrants of the Eucharist, but there is no sign that any one of them was *the* bishop. Monepiscopacy had not yet come to Corinth.

Following Capper in part, one might suppose that Clement was writing at a time when the Christian community in Corinth was at the stage of combining a number of small house churches into a single church for the whole city.⁴ It could easily be imagined that some who had been presbyter/bishops of their own house churches were now not accepted as presbyters by all the Corinthians, when they began to meet regularly as one community. This could appear plausible as an account of the situation which led Clement to write, but as he says nothing about any such change, it can find no confirmation in the contents of his letter. Addressed to ‘the church of God sojourning in Corinth’, the letter has no mention of a single bishop as its head, and never speaks of changes affecting meeting-places. In fact, in the early chapters all the stress falls on the baneful effects of ‘jealousy and envy’⁵ both in Old Testament times and since the coming of Christ, and the Corinthians are accused of having acted unjustly by deposing some of their presbyter/bishops.

We are on firm ground, however, if we emphasise the writer’s concern with the different functions assigned in the Old Testament to the high priest, priests, levites and laymen.⁶ Here he sees a kind of pattern of the ‘bishops and deacons, of those who were going to believe’, appointed by the apostles, on a basis of Scriptural authority.⁷ There is no indication of the Corinthians’ having deposed any deacons; Clement concentrates on the respect due to presbyter/bishops whether appointed directly by the apostles or after them ‘by other men of repute with the consent of the whole church’,⁸ words which tell against the situation envisaged as a possibility in the last paragraph. The message to the instigators of the revolt is unequivocal: they are humbly to submit themselves to the presbyters.⁹ In his letter, then, Clement provides evidence that, not very long before Ignatius wrote, there were at least two important churches which appear to have been without a monepiscopal structure, having at their head a college of presbyters: Corinth and, it would seem, Rome itself. Furthermore, it should be noted that Clement does not urge monepiscopacy as a remedy for internal dissensions, nor does he show in his Scripturally based arguments any signs of kinship with Ignatius. The insubordination manifested in the deposing of presbyters

was behaviour unparalleled in any of the churches to which Ignatius wrote, to judge by the content of his letters. The extensive use that Clement makes of the Old Testament when arguing against deposition may indicate that there was no Christian consensus to which he could appeal.

However, indications of some development in the Christian understanding of ordained ministers were observed in *I Clement* by Dix, who remarked:

By the time of Clement, the 'president' is thought of as analogous to 'the high priest' in the midst of the priestly People of God, and his 'liturgy' is conceived of exclusively in sacrificial terms (*prosphelein ta dora*).¹⁰

In a church organized on 'Ignatian' lines, this 'president', whose role corresponded to that of the Jewish high priest, would of course normally be the bishop; at Corinth whichever member of the presbyteral college presided at a particular Eucharist, and however he had been chosen, would on that occasion have fulfilled the same role. Although Clement referred to the Old Testament pattern of high priest, priests, levites and laymen, it is important to realise that he cannot be cited as an authority for equating a Christian presbyter who celebrates the Eucharist with an Old Testament priest; when a presbyter presides on behalf of his bishop, he, like the bishop, is an 'icon' of Christ, and his role is analogous to that of the Jewish high priest.

The writer of the *Epistle to the Hebrews*, which has been called 'the Epistle of Priesthood',¹¹ in fact describes Christ as 'high priest' (ἀρχιερεύς) or 'great priest' rather than simply as 'priest' (ιερεύς), except when he is constrained by the language of *Psalms* 110:4, 'Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek.'¹² In accordance with this picture of Christ as high priest in *Hebrews*, Dix having insisted that 'as prophetic teacher [the bishop] chiefly represents the Father', went on to state that 'as high-priest (not priest) he presided over the eucharist at the altar. Here comparison of the bishop's "liturgy" with the office of the Son became ... inevitable.'¹³ On the very first page of the first chapter of *The Shape of the Liturgy* Dix had interpreted, as providing a pattern for the liturgical practice of the Christian

community, the important passage in *I Clement* XL, 5, to which I have already alluded:

Unto the high-priest (=the celebrant-bishop) his special 'liturgies' have been appointed, and to the priests (=presbyters) their special place is assigned, and on the levites (=deacons) their special 'deaconings' are imposed; the layman is bound by the ordinances for the laity. Let each of you, brethren, make eucharist to God according to his own order, keeping a good conscience and not transgressing the appointed rule of his 'liturgy'.¹⁴

Dix found great significance in the precise wording of this passage, for:

though Clement, to carry through his analogy of the eucharistic assembly with the sacrifices of the Old Testament, styles the presbyters 'priests', he is careful not to say that they have a 'special liturgy' like the bishop or the deacons, but only their own 'special place', in the semi-circle of seats round the throne.¹⁵

If Dix is right in this, it means that the 'Ignatian' pattern is discernible not only in Ignatius but also embryonically in *I Clement*, though here of course monepiscopacy is not yet in evidence. There is, however, a need to keep in mind that in some respects, before the adoption of monepiscopacy, 'the closest analogy to the ordained ministry of the early Church is the eldership of the synagogue.'¹⁶ Despite this, following Dix, I wish to emphasise the bishop's high-priesthood at the altar, where he is an 'icon' of Christ, together with his teaching/pastoral office in which he 'represents the Father'. It is in contrast with this that I shall stress the presbyters' non-liturgical role in governing and judging the community, the presbyterate being collectively 'a representation of the council of the apostles'.¹⁷ Since Clement wrote on behalf of the church in Rome, it is interesting that, as will be shown in Chapter VI, Western rites for the ordination of deacons refer to the Levites, while Eastern rites do not.

The *Didache*, which as we have said may reflect conditions in Syria in the late first century, needs little more than a mention. Like *I Clement* it shows no knowledge of the 'Ignatian' pattern, but treats of locally appointed and functioning ministers, namely bishops and deacons, and is concerned that they should not be despised.¹⁸ But it also testifies to the continued existence of travelling ministers, apostles and prophets. Amongst these latter there may be charlatans, but if a genuine prophet wishes to settle in a locality he is to be welcomed and supported, 'for [the prophets] are your high priests (ἀρχιερεῖς)'.¹⁹ The work thus seems to belong to a time and an area in which the travelling ministers with great prestige were beginning to be replaced by bishops and deacons who were resident members of the local churches. It has been suggested by P. Bradshaw that an effort was apparently being made by the *Didache* to promote the acceptance of bishops and deacons, which implies that they were something of a novelty.²⁰ From this then, as from the evidence provided by *I Clement*, it is clear that there was not a little variety in the way that the basic ministries developed in the early period. Nevertheless the pattern portrayed by Ignatius became universal very soon after his time and was thenceforth believed to have prevailed everywhere from the beginning. As evidence for this belief, one can cite St Irenaeus (c. 130–c. 200), with his well-known insistence on the succession of bishops as orthodox teachers of the faith.

There is, therefore, good reason for concentrating on what might be called the 'Ignatian' structure of ordained ministries. Since, however, it is admittedly a development from any of the patterns found in the New Testament, its acceptance ought not too easily to be taken for granted as proof of its legitimacy. Ramsey gives appropriate tests to be applied:

The tests of a true development are whether it bears witness to the Gospel, whether it expresses the general consciousness of the Christians, and whether it serves the organic unity of the Body in all its parts.²¹

It is simply the fact that the majority of Christians have down the ages accepted and still continue to accept, in one form or another, the three holy orders of bishops, presbyters/priests, and deacons, with the result that on no other basis is any scheme for complete Christian reunion really conceivable. We may therefore say that what

is presupposed by Ignatius fulfils the second and third of Ramsey's requirements. As regards the first, the structure bears witness to what is found in the Gospel: there are the deacons whose diaconate is an 'icon' of Christ the Servant;²² the presbyterate 'represents' the apostles associated by Christ with himself in the exercise of authority;²³ and the one bishop is a 'sign' of the one Christ whose office is prophetic, priestly, royal and pastoral.²⁴ (This last epithet is added because of the common designation of rulers as shepherds in the Old Testament, for example in *Jeremiah* 23. 1 - 4, and in *Ezekiel* 34, *passim*.)

But three objections might at once be raised: first, this scheme, based on Afanassieff's interpretation of Christ's dual role at the Last Supper, divides him into two, the Prophet/Priest/Shepherd/King and the Servant; next, this split is accentuated by the fact that while Ignatius speaks of *one* bishop, he can refer to deacons in the plural; finally, although he can see the bishop as a 'representation' of Christ, he more commonly regards him as the 'type' of the Father. This last point was in effect disposed of by Dix,²⁵ and it can also be met by quoting the words from *John* 14: 9, 'he that hath seen me hath seen the Father.' The first two objections can be taken together and answered by insisting that Ignatius did not start with truths about Christ and then try to furnish the Church with ministers as 'icons'; on the contrary, he seems to have found a structure of basic ministries which he considered to be right, and was then able to view those who held these offices as 'representations' of different aspects of the one Christ. At an ordinary meal one person alone would normally preside, while there might be one, two or more servants. Thus the liturgical pattern of one bishop presiding and the Eucharist distributed by several deacons could, as Capper suggested, easily have developed from that of the host and his servants at a domestic meal. Afanassieff's position must then be modified to affirm that the Eucharistic president 'represents' in his person the Christ who presided in the Upper Room, while the deacons are to be viewed not as separate 'icons' of Christ in their own individual persons, but as participants in one single diaconate, a 'representation', not directly of him, but of the service given by him. Incidentally, such an approach could be developed in support of the position of those who hold that while there must be one president at the Eucharist, a male, both women and men can legitimately minister as deacons.

Holy Orders and Completeness of the Church

Before moving on, it is appropriate here to quote a few lines in which Ignatius speaks of unity, the Eucharist and the three basic ministries:

Be careful therefore to observe one Eucharist, for there is one flesh of our Lord Jesus Christ, and one cup for union in his blood; there is one altar, as there is one bishop together with the presbyterate and the deacons my fellow-servants – that whatever you do, you may do it in accordance with Christ.²⁶

This passage shows that for Ignatius there is a connection between the Eucharist, the unity of the local church and the threefold ministerial structure; if we are willing to accept this connection, we may claim that the ministry of bishop, presbyters and deacons, although a development, is one that is in harmony with the Johannine Christ's prayer 'that they may all be one' (*John* 17: 21) and with St Paul's remark about the unity of those who at the Lord's Supper partake of 'the one loaf' (*I Corinthians* 10: 17). It may thus be said to bear witness to the Gospel.

However, as I have already pointed out, concentration on what are usually termed the three ordained ministries must not lead to pejoratively classifying the laity as 'non-ordained', or forgetting that they, together with the ordained, are the Body and the Bride of Christ. Zizioulas insists that 'the baptized person does not simply become a "Christian", as we tend to think, but he becomes a *member of a particular "ordo"* in the eucharistic community.'²⁷ Although from this point of view laymen are different from the deacons, from the presbyterate, and from the bishop – as each one of these is different from the other two – , yet it must not be forgotten that, when looked at in another way, the 'icons' of the Body and the Bride are seen to be composed by the *entire* eucharistic community, the so-called non-ordained no less than the so-called ordained. In connection with Afanassieff's idea that for Ignatius at the Eucharist the presbyters are 'icons' of the apostles, I referred to the difficulty arising if apostles/presbyters are regarded as 'representations' of communicants. Since it is a mistake to treat icons as fixed algebraic symbols, it makes better sense to follow Dix and Zizioulas in viewing the laity as an "'ordo" in the eucharistic community', while maintaining also that *qua* communicants the bishop, the presbyters, and the deacons are equally members of the people of God, the laity. When Ignatius wrote to any

local church, he was addressing the whole community, and had in mind both the so-called lay members and the so-called ordained.

A consideration of this Ignatian structure leads us then to conclude that it is not an alien importation into Christianity but a legitimate Scripturally based development. A pattern more closely resembling what is found in *I Clement* or the *Didache* might no doubt have evolved and become universally accepted, and then for it similar claims could legitimately have been made. The fact nevertheless is that what can be traced back to Ignatius did within a very short time prevail, to the exclusion of other possible ways of ordering the Church. And it has been remarked that at about the same time there were other parallel developments:

In the later second century, before and after 180, three things became definitely fixed: the chief books of our New Testament were accepted as canonical Scripture, side by side with the Old Testament: the Apostles' Creed was taking a definite shape: and there were Bishops presiding everywhere in all the churches.²⁸

For those who believe that in some sense the Church has been guided by the Holy Spirit it is significant that these three developments occurred roughly simultaneously.²⁹ Furthermore, as regards the 'Ignatian' pattern of basic ministries, it is ecclesiologically significant, for it witnesses to the completeness of the Church as a body, not composed of a number of identical units but constituted by its different organs. This conception had been expressed several years earlier by G. Dix when writing of the pre-Constantinian Church: 'Every "order" has its own *leitourgia*, its own special function in the corporate life and action of the Christian "Body", in which it is irreplaceable ...' In a footnote Dix gave a telling example:

So in Cyprian, *Ep.*, v. 2, when only a single presbyter can be smuggled into the prison to celebrate the last eucharist for the confessors awaiting execution, he must still be accompanied by a deacon. Without the co-operation of all orders, the eucharist is not the fully corporate act of the Body of Christ.³⁰

It could be objected that here 'the co-operation of *all* orders' was not in fact completely insisted on, because Cyprian did not demand the presence at this eucharist of a bishop and of more presbyters than one. The answer to this would be that abnormal circumstances compelled the presbyter to represent the bishop,³¹ while at the same time in himself he had to represent all his fellow-presbyters. The striking thing is that in spite of all difficulties a deacon did accompany the presbyter.

A little more must be said concerning St Cyprian, the famous third-century bishop and theologian. His language could at times reflect that of St Ignatius, when for instance he wrote: 'You should know that the bishop is in the Church and the Church is in the bishop.'³² He could speak too of involving clergy and laity in decision-making.³³ Nevertheless in Cyprian, Zizioulas remarked,

the eschatological image of the apostolic college surrounding Christ – an image which was applied to the structure of the local Church by Ignatius and Hippolytus – is changed to become an image of the apostolic college surrounding its head, St Peter.³⁴

If this is so, and Zizioulas argues his case convincingly on the basis of Cyprian's writings, then in him we have an example of an 'iconographical' shift which did not of itself affect the actual Ignatian structure. Zizioulas, since he is dealing with 'Apostolic Continuity and Succession', fastens on Cyprian's understanding of the episcopate as extremely important. However, not long after his martyrdom in AD 258, significant changes in the actual functions of the ministries in local Churches began to occur, and these had 'iconographical' repercussions. Consequently, Cyprian and his 'iconography' of the bishop need not now detain us.

The normal appearance of the early Church at worship was well portrayed by Hebert:

Each Lord's Day was a weekly Easter, and in each place the local church assembled to celebrate the Christian mystery. All the members of the Church had their part in the action; the bishop presided and rehearsed the Eucharistic prayer, the presbyters were grouped round him, the deacons assisted and

received the offerings which the people brought, of bread and wine and other gifts, and the people had their part in song and prayer, hearing the Scriptures read in their own language, bringing their gifts at the Offertory and receiving together the body and blood of the Lord.³⁵

Here we have a perhaps idealised portrayal of the 'Ignatian' pattern, set forth in a way which depicts each local church as an example of completeness, a depiction which could be described as somewhat defective because Hebert does not mention the charismatic ministries which were for a long time still to be found in many places.³⁶ In any case, as regards holy orders, Hebert needs to be supplemented by a theological principle enunciated by Zizioulas:-

On the local level ... the head of the local Church, the bishop, is conditioned by the existence of his community and the rest of the ministries, particularly the *presbyterium*. There is no ministry which does not need the other ministries; no ministry possesses the fulness, the plenitude [*sic*] of grace and power without a relationship with the other ministries.³⁷

In the 'Ignatian' structure this principle was, for a time, realised. Its subsequent fate, however, was different from that of the other two constituents of the Church mentioned in the quotation from Hebert reproduced earlier in this chapter. To paraphrase what he – and doubtless others also – have observed, around the year 180 there was beginning to be widespread acceptance of the canon of the New Testament, the articles of belief summarised in the Apostles' Creed, and the pattern of ordained ministries found in Ignatius. Down the centuries, whatever individuals may have thought of the comparative merits of some books ultimately included in the New Testament and of others excluded from it, no one has seriously suggested revising the canon of Scripture; the Apostles' Creed has always been accepted unchanged by the vast majority of Christians; but there has been no comparable reluctance to modify the 'Ignatian' structure of ministries, that of bishops, presbyters/priests, and deacons. This third constituent of the Christian Church has, on the one hand, had a history of undergoing changes which suggest distortion rather than 'the steady unfolding of its inner

reality',³⁸ while, on the other hand, disputes connected with it have contributed in no small measure to disunity.

It may therefore be asked how much can fairly be claimed for this 'Ignatian' structure of ordained ministries. Is what the Church of the second century accepted as normative to be regarded in the same way for all time? We may be prepared to give much weight to the implications of the statement that 'there is an exemplary period to which Zizioulas would direct our gaze. Its upper bound is the fourth century and it begins with the dawn of the post-apostolic age.'³⁹ This, however, does not answer the question: what in practice should this have meant for ordained ministries of the Church? Chapters IV and V will present glimpses of the vast changes which came about in consequence of the new and different challenges it had to face from the fourth century onwards. Yet if, as seems obvious, the Church has from time to time to adapt its structures when it is confronted by changed circumstances, there is no sense in speaking of an 'exemplary period' unless some elements discernible in it remain normative for all time. After showing that there are such elements which, practically speaking, have been lost, I shall want to ask whether it is reasonable to try to recover them, and if so, how this might be done. These questions will be discussed in Chapter VII.

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1. K. Stevenson, *The First Rites*, London, 1989, p. 9.
 2. E. Duffy, 'The popes: theory and fact', *The Tablet*, 4 July 1998, p. 872. The article provoked many readers to write to *The Tablet*, expressing agreement or disagreement.
 3. *I Clem.* XLIV, 4 - προσενέγκοντας τὰ δῶρα.
 4. 'Order and Ministry in the Social Pattern of the New Testament Church', *Order and Ministry*, p. 85f.
 5. *I Clem.* opening para. - παροικούση Κόρινθον; V, 2 - διὰ ζῆλον καὶ φόβον.
 6. *Ibid.*, XL, 5.
 7. *Ibid.*, XLII, 4f. Clement cites as ἡ γραφή, καταστήσω τοὺς ἐπισκόπους αὐτῶν ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ καὶ τοὺς διακόνους αὐτῶν ἐν πίστει, whereas Isa. 60:17 in LXX has: δώσω τοὺς ἄρχοντας σου ἐν εἰρήνῃ, καὶ τοὺς ἐπισκόπους σου ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ.
 8. *Ibid.*, XLIV, 3.
 9. *Ibid.*, LVII, 1.
 10. 'The Ministry in the Early Church', in *The Apostolic Ministry*, p. 249.
 11. A. Nairne, *The Epistle of Priesthood - Studies in the Epistle to the Hebrews*, Edinburgh, 1913.
 12. *Heb* 2:17, *passim*; 10:21; 5:6; 6:20; 7:11, 15, 17.
 13. G. Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy*, p. 32.
 14. *The Shape of the Liturgy*, p. 1. In n. 1 on p. 2 Dix remarks: 'The laity are an "order" in the church no less than the "holy orders" of the clergy, and were

anciently required to undergo a three years' preparation and training before they were allowed to enter it by baptism and confirmation.' Here he anticipates Zizioulas: cf. the quotation in this chapter on p. 42, as well as statements made in Chapter I.

15. *The Shape of the Liturgy*, p. 33. The Greek of *I Clement* XL, 5 is: τῷ γὰρ ἀρχιερεῖ ἴδιαι λειτουργίαι δεδομένοι εἰσὶν, καὶ τοῖς ἱερεῦσιν ὁ τύπος προστέτακται, καὶ λευταῖς ἴδιαι διακονίαι ἐπικείνται· ὁ λαϊκὸς ἄνθρωπος τοῖς λαϊκοῖς προστάγμασιν δέδεται.
16. Faith and Order Advisory Group, *The Priesthood of the Ordained Ministry*, London, 1986, para. (51), p. 27. (More will be said in Chapter VI about the antecedents of the presbyterate in the synagogue.)
17. Ignatius, *Magnesians* VI, 1.
18. *Didache*, XV, 1f.
19. *Ibid.*, XIII, 1 – 3.
20. *Liturgical Presidency in the Early Church*, p. 9.
21. A. M. Ramsey, *The Gospel and the Catholic Church*, p. 64.
22. ὁ διακονῶν, *Lk* 22:27, cf. διακονῆσαι, *Mk* 10:45; παῖς, *Mt* 12:18, *Acts* 3: 13 etc.
23. *Mt* 19:28, *Lk* 22:30.
24. *Jn* 10: 11, *Mt* 9:36 – cf. Ignatius, *Romans*, IX, 1.
25. See above, p. 43, with the reference in n. 13.
26. *Philadelphians*, IV.
27. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 216 [his italics], citing *I Clem.* XL. 3 – XLI. 7 as implying that 'the layman' is also an 'order' (τάγμα or τάξις). (In fact XLI does not go beyond 4, while τάγμα appears at XL. 1.) It is interesting to notice here, in connection with what was earlier quoted from *I Clement*, that Tertullian also, speaking of *all* Christians, states that after baptism they are anointed like Aaron and the priests of the Old Testament (*de Bapt.* VII, 1, *SC* 35, Paris, 1952, p. 76). For further discussion of 'the laity', v. G.R.Evans, *The Reception of the Faith*, London, 1997, pp. 12ff.
28. A.G. Hebert, *Apostle and Bishop*, p. 54.
29. Cf. the quotation from T.G. Jalland in Chapter VI, p. 93f.
30. 'The Ministry in the Early Church', in *The Apostolic Ministry*, p. 195f., with n. 1, ref. Cyprian, *Ep.* iv, *PL* 4, 236.
31. Cf. Ignatius, *Smyrnaeans*, VII, 1.
32. *Scire debes episcopum in ecclesia esse et ecclesiam in episcopo*, *Ep.* Ixix, *PL* 4, 419.
33. *Ep.* xxxviii, *PL* 4, 309.
34. *Being as Communion*, p. 200. (In Chapter VI reference will be made to the important evidence supplied by Hippolytus.)
35. A.G. Hebert, *Apostle and Bishop*, p. 79.
36. Cf. Green's remark (*Freed to Serve*, p. 43) concerning the continued existence of prophets and prophetesses, exorcists and miraculous healers. He cites Justin (*Dialogus cum Tryphone* 82, *PG* 6, 669B), Tertullian (*de Anima* 9, *PL* 2, 700C–701A), and Irenaeus (*adversus Haereses* II, 32, 5, *SC* 294, p. 342).
37. *Being as Communion*, p. 139.
38. The phrase, quoted in Chapter I from an article by Dr. E. Duffy in *The Tablet*, 4 July 1998, p. 872, will be further discussed in Chapter VII.
39. Chapter I, p. 16

IV THE ONSET OF MANY CHANGES

What I am calling the 'Ignatian' structure of basic ministries had become the norm by the end of the second century. To summarise Dix's description of the *liturgical* position in the pre-Nicene Church: deacons were the bishop's assistants, but could not act alone; a presbyter had no specific role in worship when the bishop was present, but in his absence could act as his liturgical deputy, assisted by deacons; most of the evidence assumes that there would normally be together at the Eucharist the bishop, the presbyters and the deacons, with of course the other members of the community.¹ *Administratively*, the presbyters functioned as a college, and so Dix wrote:

In the Church ... the city was the invariable unit; a single presbytery (later under a single bishop) was the invariable rule, however large the local Church. By the third century any other arrangement would have been considered tantamount to schism.²

This assertion ought perhaps to be modified, for Dix seems to have overstated the absolute nature of the refusal to allow there to be more than one bishop in a city. For example, in 395 Valerius, bishop of Hippo, feeling that he needed help, arranged for St Augustine to become his assistant. Augustine at first demurred, but was prevailed upon to accept consecration on being informed that there were precedents for such an arrangement.³

In any case, in the third century there can already be seen the first signs of developments which foreshadowed a far-reaching

transformation of the Church, a transformation which became clearly visible in the years following Constantine's conversion. Even before this took place, Christians had begun to constitute 'a majority, or almost a majority, in the cities of some parts of the East, and an imposing minority in others'.⁴ It is nevertheless not inaccurate to lay great emphasis on the importance of the sudden growth that resulted from the end of persecutions and from the emperor's acceptance of Christianity.

The truth is that what had been steady growth accelerated rapidly after the issue of the so-called Edict of Milan in AD 313, because henceforth the open profession of Christianity involved no risk of persecution. Christians must have rejoiced that their meeting-places no longer needed to be inconspicuous, perhaps the courtyard of a private house or a large room in it. Nevertheless the conversion of Constantine was not an unmixed benefit to the Church. Many who now began to flock in as converts were inadequately 'christianised', and moreover they brought with them some of the accepted ideas prevalent in secular society, or perhaps reinforced these where they were already present. How was the Church to cope with the new situation?

By and large what it did was to adopt and make regular use of some expedients, which in the previous century had been resorted to occasionally, sometimes because of the emergencies caused by severe persecutions. The increase in the number of Christians in some large cities had already necessitated the creation of what nowadays would be called 'daughter churches', with presbyters being given the responsibility of looking after these; moreover, as a result of persecution, not a few communities had on occasion been forced to exist for a time without their bishop, either through his being compelled to go into hiding or because of his being martyred. This meant that the presbyters would so far as possible have carried out his functions until he could return, or until a new bishop could be chosen and consecrated.

Besides this, what was in some respects a precursor of the later parochial system existed in Egypt by the early fourth century: there were seventeen priests in Alexandria and nineteen in the nearby district of Mareotis,⁵ and these Alexandrian presbyters had a status *vis-à-vis* their bishop which is worth noting, even though it was different from that of the presbyters in most other places at that time. Using modern

Church of England terminology we might say that individually they were incumbents of important parishes, while as a college they formed the Bishop's Council. They were men of great influence, and one might compare them with the members of the College of Cardinals, if cardinals were actually, what nominally most of them are, the priests of the parish churches of the city of Rome. In that city also, although there is uncertainty as to the date of the establishment of the *tituli*, as the 'local centres of religious life were known', there were already forty-six presbyters by the middle of the third century.⁶

Thus A.E. Harvey has grounds for stating that while in the New Testament, in *I Clement*, and in Ignatius, presbyters always appear as a group,

by the third century there is evidence of a change: language is used of the presbyter which suggests that he was expected to exercise personal responsibility and leadership in the congregation.⁷

J.-M.R. Tillard is prepared to write more explicitly:

Around 250 we find in Cyprian the firm evidence of an extension of this [eucharistic] presidency to the presbyters, with the assistance of a deacon, under certain circumstances.⁸

It should always be remembered that it was in urban rather than in rural areas that most Christian converts were to be found. However,

the absence of cities in a few provinces (e.g. Cappadocia) had compelled the placing of 'country-bishops' (*χωρεπίσκοποι*) in villages, to minister to widely scattered districts. But this was always felt to be something unnatural. Everywhere the Church's typical and instinctive unit was the *παροικία*.⁹

Indeed, one result of the great increase in the number of Christians and of Christian communities after AD 313 was a corresponding increase in the number of bishoprics, so that in many regions each city had its own bishop. Nevertheless, for the reason given in the quotation from Dix at the beginning of this chapter,

however numerous the Christians might become in a city, there could never be any question of dividing them into two separate churches each with its own bishop.¹⁰

Yet, as already stated, besides those in surrounding villages, there were often 'daughter churches' in the see cities in addition to the 'cathedral'.¹¹

It must therefore be recognised that important changes in the Church began to take place in some places and to some extent as early as the third century, but clearly changes became much more widespread and far-reaching in the aftermath of the conversion of Constantine. The process had decisive effects on the structures of the Church, on the roles and functions first of bishops and presbyters, and later on of deacons also. Significantly, J.M. Barnett in his book, *The Diaconate*, has a chapter entitled 'The radical transition of the fourth century'. One visible and momentous result of the changes was that for most Christians, 'the presbyter became the normal liturgical celebrant, as he has continued to be till to-day.'¹² K.E. Kirk thus described what happened:

As the congregations under his charge multiplied, the burden of government increasingly fell on the bishop's shoulders; and the presbyters came to be occupied more with liturgical and pastoral duties alone ... It was in this way that the bishops gradually became 'diocesan officials', with ever-growing administrative responsibilities, and the curious reversal of the respective duties of bishop and presbyter took place.¹³

The disappearing, to a large extent, of a check upon episcopal autocracy was a further consequence of this 'curious reversal'. Hebert stated bluntly:

Previously, the presbyters had a positive right to be consulted on all the affairs of the Church. Now they had become a number of individual deputies of the bishop, with authority to perform a limited number of functions in a particular district.¹⁴

As Hebert's use of the word 'individual' suggests, this change in presbyteral functions also marked, or at least appeared to mark, a

profound change in what a presbyter was. Previously, as we noted when looking at the picture given in Ignatius' letters, the presbyterate had been essentially a corporate office; even in Alexandria, where there already existed what was beginning to look like a number of *city* parishes, the emphasis on the corporate nature of the presbyters' office was far from lost; but wherever and whenever in a Christian community 'the presbyter became the normal liturgical celebrant', he was inevitably beginning to function in very many respects as hitherto the bishop had functioned. Thus one effect of the changes was that what had been essentially different ministries began to be assimilated to one another, and a significant step was taken towards treating 'ministry' and 'priesthood' as virtually equivalent terms. The tendency to do this became, and has remained, very persistent, but instead of enriching, it has impoverished the Church.

Such changes obviously destroyed the 'iconic' pattern which could previously be discerned in the persons of the bishop and his presbyters. A normally absent bishop could not be regarded as 'presiding in the likeness of God', or being the living 'image of Christ'; a single presbyter, deputising for the bishop, could hardly under normal circumstances represent 'the *synedrion* of the apostles'.¹⁵ But apparently when the changes were taking place, nobody discussed the way in which they detracted from the completeness of the Church or their implications for an 'iconic' view of ordained ministers.

Associated with what affected those in holy orders, there was also a change which had to do with the basic unit of the Church. For most practical purposes this ceased – to use modern terminology – to be the diocese, but became the parish instead.¹⁶ Zizioulas, observing the connection, pointed out that the emergence of the parish

meant that from then on the eucharist did not require the presence of the presbyters as a college – an essential aspect of the original significance of the presbyterium – in order to exist as local Church. An *individual* presbyter was thus enough to create and lead a eucharistic gathering – a parish. Could that gathering be called 'Church'? The answer to this question has been historically a negative one with regard to the Orthodox Church.¹⁷

Roman Catholics and Anglicans¹⁸ would in theory agree that ecclesiology speaking, the parish is a sub-unit, dependent on the diocese and the episcopal ministry of the bishop. There seems unfortunately never to have been any assessment of the consequences for ecclesiology of the fact that in practice the parish has become for most purposes what it is now often *felt* to be, that is, the basic unit of the Church. But, as Zizioulas went on to say,

the creation of the parish ... in the sense of an *individual* presbyter acting as head of a eucharistic community, damaged ecclesiology seriously in two respects. On the one hand, it destroyed the image of the Church as a community in which *all* orders are necessary as *constitutive* elements. The parish as it finally prevailed in history made redundant both the deacon and the bishop. ... On the other hand ... it led to an understanding of the bishop as an administrator rather than a eucharistic president, and the presbyter as a 'mass-specialist', a 'priest' ... It is for these reasons that we should regard the proper ecclesiological status of the parish as one of the most fundamental problems in ecclesiology – both in the West and in the East.¹⁹

A. Schmemmann, another Orthodox writer, has similarly remarked that the division of the diocese into parishes and the transformation of the presbyter into a parish rector 'has never been seriously studied and interpreted theologically'.²⁰ One is therefore entitled to regard the way in which the Church responded to the demands of the new situation in the fourth century as less than ideal. It was of course necessary to provide for the thousands of new converts to have opportunities for regular worship; unfortunately, perhaps because the minds of theologians were concentrated on opposing Arianism and other heresies, the alterations which affected the structure of the Church came about with virtually no theological consideration. And to this day little thought has been given to these changes by theologians,²¹ although Calvin is an exception in so far as he strove to restore a pattern which he believed to be based on the New Testament. This pattern he bequeathed to Presbyterianism, and in later chapters its resemblance to the 'Ignatian' structure will be remarked on.

Holy Orders and Completeness of the Church

The fourth century changes both affected, and were affected by, a different attitude on the part of the laity towards their participation in the Eucharist and towards the ordained clergy. To quote H. Wybrew,

The rapid influx of new members into the Church as a consequence of imperial patronage helped to diminish the sense of the Church as a community. It was not difficult for the thousands who flocked into the basilicas to feel that what really mattered was what was being done by the clergy in the sanctuary. ...

The decline in lay communion was rapid, first in the East, later in the West. ...The fact that most lay people ceased to receive communion meant that the Eucharist became still more a ritual action performed by the clergy, at which the laity were attenders, but in which they were not active participants.²²

It is easy to understand why there came about this diminishing of 'the sense of the Church as a community', and to regard the increasing passivity of the laity as evidence of the lower standards which were the almost inevitable result of the sudden huge increase in the number of Christians, many of whom were only imperfectly converted. None the less, this decline in the frequency of lay communion did not necessarily, or always, imply a diminution of fervour, for at times it seems to have stemmed from misplaced reverence. Thus there is some evidence that the increasing reluctance to communicate was at times due to an almost superstitious sense of the holiness of the sacrament and a dread of communicating unworthily.²³ Exhortations to frequent communion, however, proved ineffectual, and at the same time, through the rise of the parish system, there was a heightening of the status and importance of the individual presbyter as the celebrant at most Eucharists. Various factors, then, served to separate such a man both from the bishop, now no longer seen as the normal eucharistic president, and from the laity, most of whom were only too willing to be infrequent communicants and second-class citizens of the kingdom of heaven, while the fact of his belonging to a collective body, the *presbyterium*, began to appear less important.

Closely connected with this prevalence of lower standards in many 'parishes' was the rise of monasticism, primarily a *lay* movement and a

response on the part of Christians who felt that the official Church was being corrupted by worldliness. Some monks were indeed presbyters, but a monk's title to respect was his personal reputation for asceticism and holiness rather than the fact of his being ordained. Many monks were reluctant to accept ordination, and St John Cassian, who spread Eastern monastic ideals in the West, wished that they should all be aware that one of the Devil's tricks is to try to persuade them that through taking orders they will edify many people, while in reality he seeks to 'draw us away from the humility and difficulty in this our purpose [to live the monastic life]'.²⁴ The Church in the 'diocese' and in the 'parish' was clearly the loser when numbers of its best people abandoned it for the sake of entering upon the monastic life.

Thus even though some changes in the Church's structures in the period which followed Constantine's conversion were no doubt inevitable, their introduction coincided with, or perhaps resulted from, what was in some respects a lowering of standards. Nor does it appear that these changes were the fruit of a theological assessment of what was required by the altered situation; the new arrangements were simply pragmatic responses to what was happening. It is instructive to compare what is found in a decision of the Council of Arles, held in AD 314, with what St Jerome wrote around the end of the century: it is widely believed that the former was enacted to forbid a practice which could well have been a consequence of the recent savage persecution, that of deacons sometimes celebrating the Eucharist when a priest was not available;²⁵ Jerome, however, was angered by what he considered to be the tendency of deacons to become arrogant²⁶ through their numbers being restricted – on the basis of *Acts* 6: 3, there were no more than seven in Rome. Presbyters, on the other hand, had become very numerous, and thus not only did Jerome castigate deacons for their pride, but also, in order to bring home to them their inferior status, he magnified that of presbyters. These he depicted as individuals, rather than as members of a college, and asserted that they were differentiated from bishops by nothing other than the power of the latter to ordain.²⁷ While then the Council of Arles was apparently acting on the basis of an ecclesiological concern, Jerome was doing little more than giving vent to his easily aroused indignation, although at the same time he has unwittingly provided evidence of disharmony between members of the different orders, and of the individualising of the presbyterate.

What, however, was really required of the fourth-century Church and is required by new circumstances whenever they have to be faced, has been well expressed by Schmemmann:

In the empirical life of the Church one administrative system is replaced by another, and each of them is the result of a 'canonical adjustment', i.e. the application of the canonical tradition to a particular situation. Yet, only a clear understanding of the canonical tradition itself with all of its theological and ecclesiological implications can supply us with solid criteria for a canonical evaluation of any such 'adjustments' and for measuring their *canonicity*.²⁸

If then we may assume that when assessing of the canonicity of an adjustment one should take account of Ramsey's criterion, 'whether [it] speaks of the Gospel and the one Body', there would appear to be reasonable grounds for criticising what took place in the fourth century. 'It destroyed the image of the Church as a community in which *all* orders are necessary as *constitutive* elements,' to quote Zizioulas yet again.²⁹ For him, as we have already seen, this means *four* orders, laity (the people of God), deacons, presbyters and bishop. A parish church, in which the Eucharist is celebrated without a bishop and a presbyterate (college of presbyters) and a deacon, is an incomplete local manifestation of the Catholic Church; to some degree it fails to speak through its structure 'of the Gospel and the one Body'.³⁰

It is sad to find T. Hopko, an Orthodox theologian, attaching what seems exclusive importance to the person who presides at the Eucharist by writing:

Each eucharistic community headed by a bishop or an episcopally-ordained and appointed presbyter who sacramentally images Christ in the community as teacher, highpriest and lord – the head of the body and the bridegroom of the bride – is the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. There is nothing lacking to its mystical fulness as the presence of God's kingdom in the fallen world.³¹

In these sentences Hopko shows that he understands the way in which ministers are 'icons' and the need for the local Church to manifest completeness ('mystical fulness'), but unfortunately at the same time he fails to take account of the presbyterate as a collegiate body, or to recognise the damage done to ecclesiology when, to revert to what concerned Schmemann, the presbyter was transformed into a parish rector.

As regards the problems resulting from the numerical increase of professing Christians, Afanassieff drew attention to the different ways in which the Church treated two features in each church to which Ignatius had attached equal importance, namely a single altar and a single bishop:

When the external conditions of church life required a partitioning of the local church's one eucharistic assembly, the Church's mentality easily overcame the problem thus presented. Ignatius of Antioch affirmed the oneness of the altar and the oneness of the bishop in each local church; there was to be maintained out of his teaching concerning the bishop's pontifical dignity only the oneness of the bishop, that of the altar being given up. As the sole high priest of his flock, the bishop became the local church's principle of unity ...³²

Rome, however, as Afanassieff noted, did make an attempt not to abandon altogether the ideal of a single altar:

Theologically, it considered the auxiliary centres as an expansion in space of the main eucharistic assembly; ... I speak here of the doctrine of the *fermentum* peculiar to the church of Rome.³³

When assessed ecclesiologically, many fourth-century changes have to be interpreted as evidence that the Church's self-understanding had become to some extent faulty. There can, of course, be no doubt that after Constantine many developments in the structures of the Church were necessary; it seems that, unfortunately, they came about on an *ad hoc* basis, and that the failure to reflect theologically upon what was being done was a bad precedent for the future. There is thus good

reason for regret, but this regret must be tempered by remembrance of the over-riding truth that ‘the ministry of the Church is not rendered impossible until it is perfected’.³⁴ Failures of the kind which we have considered, and which have recurred at other times in the Church’s history, are often bound up with over-hasty reactions to a pastoral need. It is right that pastoral needs should be met with as little delay as possible, and in order to meet them a pragmatic solution may very likely be required. Thus we can sympathize with the action of bishops in the fourth century when they sanctioned ‘adjustments’ to the earlier pattern, because we can suppose that it seemed to them that these were emergency measures, temporarily adopted to meet the pastoral needs of the multitudes flocking into the Church. Could the bishops of the time have been expected to deliberate about the future implications for ecclesiology of arrangements made in response to the exigencies of the situation? They were not to know that these would come to be accepted and retained as the normal pattern for the Church.

Unfortunately this unexamined acceptance as normal of what began as an *ad hoc* response resulted in the loss, at the genuinely local level, of the full manifestation of all the elements which hitherto had been understood as constituting the Church as an organic body: lay members, deacons, college of presbyters and bishop. Looking back, it is easy to recognise that the failure to scrutinise the changes which came about in the fourth century was ominous for the future. Hence the importance of Zizioulas’ reminders that historical developments raise questions which call for theological consideration. As J.M. Barnett wrote,

We need first of all to recall the Church’s corporate, organic constitution, which for centuries has been lost from sight and obscured in large measure by a ‘clericalism’ that has dominated the churches, whether Protestant, Anglican, Orthodox, or Roman Catholic.³⁵

This is the point at which to add a further quotation from Dix:

The idea that the various ‘orders’ were a series of ‘promotions,’ each ‘order’ containing within itself, so to speak, the powers of all those ‘below’ it, begins to come in only in the second half of the fourth century. ... This introduction of

the principle of 'hierarchy' in place of that of an 'organism' is important in its effects. Not only does it incidentally finally place the deacon below the presbyter, as an inferior, not a complementary minister, but it completes the destruction of the idea of the ministry of each local Church as an organic whole, in which parts are not interchangeable but have each their own function. It opens the possibility of a clerical 'career', by a regular succession of 'promotions' leading naturally to the presbyterate as the standard full sacramental minister, with the bishopric (as the *administrative* superior of a number of other such full ministers) as a prize for the most able or fortunate. ... During the fourth century 'clericalism' has come in.³⁶

About this there is a good deal which calls for comment. One may well feel that the concept of a series of 'promotions' is, or should be, alien to the spirit of the Christian Church, and that the Church's ministries 'are not interchangeable but have each their own function'. Nevertheless all in holy orders, whether bishops, presbyters or deacons, remain members of the order of laity, and there is much to be said in favour of what has come to be the normal practice of no longer ordaining presbyters or bishops *per saltum*. Many Christians consider it desirable that those who subsequently become presbyters or bishops should first have been ordained to the diaconate, and should remember that they still remain deacons with the duty of ministering in a diaconal spirit.

As for 'clericalism', this, in a different sense, was already in existence by about the beginning of the third century, when in some places there were stipendiary clergy. The *Didache*, had even earlier urged that genuine prophets and teachers, and perhaps bishops and deacons, should receive support *in kind*.³⁷ Around 250 Cyprian, citing as a parallel to clerical salaries the tithes paid to the Levites in the Old Testament dispensation, insisted that those who had been ordained should devote themselves wholly to the Church and keep themselves free from all worldly business.³⁸

It is, however, not 'clericalism' of this kind, but that of the type described by Dix, against which Zizioulas has continually protested. Thus he wrote,

Holy Orders and Completeness of the Church

No ministry in the Church can be understood outside the context of the community. This should not be explained in terms of representativeness and delegation of authority, for these terms being basically juridical finally lead to a separation of the ordained person from the community: to act *on behalf* of the community means to stand *outside* it because it means to act *in its place*.³⁹

Bearing in mind this important theological point, we should notice an alteration in the way the bishop began to be regarded during the period we are considering. In *Jurisdiction in the Early Church* Dix stressed the importance of the changes which occurred, apparently unnoticed, towards the end of the fourth century: one of these was that the bishop of a local church began to be regarded not as a 'leader' and 'president' of a community, but as ruler of a 'diocese' or 'territory'.⁴⁰ To use terms which we shall meet in Chapters V and VII, episcopacy became 'imperial' instead of 'paterfamilial'. Moniepiscopacy can be described as 'imperial' when the bishop becomes in practice the one who by himself rules the community, instead of being himself a member, albeit the president, of the governing body of presbyters, fellow-assessors whose agreement he needs to secure.

Moreover, it is essential constantly to remember that the changes attracted little attention. Dix remarked:

This universal shifting of emphasis in the conception of the Church seems to have passed unrecognized at the time. There are virtually no protests or reactions. Old forms continue everywhere, though with a changing meaning. Its completion is symbolized by the substitution of the new conception of a written *statute* Canon Law for the old *customary* Canon Law of pre-Nicene days, which takes place everywhere more or less at the same time, c. AD 390 – 410.⁴¹

Relevant to what was said above about the impairing of the completeness of the local Church is the comment made by Dix on the 'shifting of emphasis': 'what has been impoverished is not the notion of the Episcopate as such, but the notion of the Church as the "Body of Christ"'.⁴²

For some time now there has been a growing tendency to insist that the Church lost as well as gained through Constantine's conversion. One unfortunate by-product was that 'bishops sometimes became important imperial officials, absorbed in a burdensome work of administration and justice.'⁴³ In spite of general misgivings felt about what it meant for the Church that the emperor professed Christianity, it is only comparatively recently that a few theologians are beginning to subject to theological scrutiny the fourth-century 'adjustments' or 'shifting of emphasis' which impinged on the ordained ministries. This scrutiny is in fact of great importance, for what happened in and soon after the time of Constantine affected not only the functions of the Church's ministers, but also altered the way in which bishops, priests and deacons were 'iconically' regarded. The progress of such change, moreover, has continued sporadically down the ages, and is a matter which will be come before us in succeeding chapters.

In the light of new circumstances, and of the differing environments in which it finds itself, the Church can never keep absolutely unaltered its ministerial structures as it inherits them. As I stated, there is in principle no reason for blaming the fourth-century Church for making alterations in order to cope with the new situation with which it was confronted. As *Episcopal Ministry* points out, 'theological rationale and pastoral necessity may not always sit comfortably together, except insofar as pastoral necessity provides its own theological justification.'⁴⁴ One can understand and sympathize with this remark, and yet still regret failures to seek deliberately to bring about necessary change in ways which preserve all that is ecclesiologically right in the inherited pattern. We today are doubtless unable to determine how this should have been done in the period we have been considering; we can do no more than draw attention to what in fact was done and to the results. Accordingly, a critical verdict on what the Church did must not be taken as implying that all would necessarily have been well if the 'Ignatian' pattern had been retained unaltered, still less that the Church could or should simply revert to it today.

In any age, some changes can prove to be beneficial. Preaching furnishes us with an example of one such variation from the practice of the early Church. May the preacher at a liturgical service be someone other than the bishop who presides, or the presbyter presiding in the absence of the bishop? St Irenaeus in the late second century insisted

that whether he was a good preacher or not, the bishop must always be the one to deliver the sermon, in virtue of his being authorised to proclaim the faith belonging to the Christian churches everywhere.⁴⁵

Yet already in the early years of the next century, Origen, as a presbyter, was asked to preach at Caesarea by the bishop who was himself presiding.⁴⁶ Indeed, some years before his ordination, when temporarily absent from Alexandria, Origen had been invited to preach by the bishops of Caesarea and of Aelia Capitolina (Jerusalem), who then received a complaint from the bishop of Alexandria, in response to which they gave examples of bishops who had similarly authorised laymen to do this.⁴⁷ It is true both that Origen had an outstanding reputation as an expositor of the Bible, and that at the time some scandal was caused by his preaching. Nevertheless, over the years it has become accepted that the sermon need not always be delivered by the presiding bishop or presbyter. (As will be shown in Chapter VI, according to the mediaeval Latin and other later ordinals, preaching came to be one of the functions which a deacon might undertake.) *Episcopal Ministry* remarks, in connection with women's ministry, that 'some would argue that sharing in the teaching ministry of the Church should be distinguished from discharging its teaching office.'⁴⁸ Whether or not this distinction might be invoked to justify preaching by someone other than the eucharistic president, it would be 'archaeological religion' to seek in this matter to revert to Irenaeus' position. His words, though, are a salutary reminder to preachers that it is their responsibility to set forth the Church's faith and not some idiosyncratic notions of their own.

Before this chapter is brought to an end, two final quotations from Dix demand inclusion: 'the Church', he wrote, 'is an Organism which cannot unlive its own life,' asserting at the same time that changes such as those we have been considering were made 'by the mind of the Church.'⁴⁹ The latter part of his statement appears very questionable, because it is difficult to see how an unconscious process could really reflect the Church's mind, mind being an entity which must surely involve consciousness. But it is both true and important to insist that as 'an Organism' the Church cannot detach itself from its past. Whatever loss has been incurred through changes made in the way that they were made in the fourth century and later, the Church cannot regain its organic completeness, as embodied in the 'Ignatian' pattern, by

deliberately and systematically attempting to reproduce in the present age exactly what existed in the pre-Constantinian era. That would reek of artificiality, and would deserve Ramsey's condemnation as 'archaeological religion'.⁵⁰ But this does not mean that we should not seek to reform the pattern which obtains to-day, and Anglicans working for improvement ought continually to bear in mind the truth which Dix pointed out as long ago as the 1940s:

... in our system what the pre-Nicene Church called *episkope* and *diakonia* have largely been transferred to the 'parish priest' (and his assistants, who are not encouraged to remain deacons longer than they can help).⁵¹

Dix of course wrote this with the Church of England and other Anglican Churches in mind. To a very large extent, however, in one way or another it has become and remains true that in most Christian denominations *episkope* and *diakonia* are embodied in the 'parish priest' or his equivalent. Even the majority of Orthodox rarely participate in a celebration of the Divine Liturgy presided over by a bishop, joined by some of his presbyters and assisted by one or more deacons. Ordained ministry has become monochrome, and the process leading to this state of affairs began long ago. The fourth-century changes affecting the Church's holy orders have in fact diminished, rather than increased, the completeness of the mystical Body of Christ. At this stage I shall not discuss how in the twenty-first century remedial action might be taken, but in Chapter VII I hope to suggest constructive ways of learning from the past, its mistakes and its successes.

1. G. Dix, 'The Ministry in the Early Church', in *The Apostolic Ministry*, p. 220.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 270.

3. In *Ep.*, xxxi, 4 (*PL* 33, 123), Augustine writes ... *nonnullis iam exemplis praecedentibus, quibus mihi omnis excusatio clauderetur* ...

4. J. Lebreton and J. Zeiller, *The History of the Primitive Church*, IV, 1091. (London 1948) More recent writers suggest a somewhat different picture.

5. J. Lebreton and J. Zeiller, *op. cit.*, p. 975–977, quoting in support of the last sentence *PG* 18, 577–581. Cf. 'The presbyters [of Alexandria] ... were not docile diocesan clergy but members of a collegiate body.' (R. Williams, *Arius - Heresy and Tradition* London, 1987, p. 44.) There has been much discussion about how bishops of Alexandria before Athanasius were consecrated, and by whom – v. W. Telfer's article, *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* (3), 1952, p. 1–13. A. M. Farrer wrote that 'it would, perhaps, be more proper to speak of the consecration

Holy Orders and Completeness of the Church

- of a *presiding* bishop, by presbyters who had a corporate episcopal authority.' (Foreword to 1957 edition of *The Apostolic Ministry*, p. xvi.)
6. J. Lebreton and J. Zeiller, *op. cit.*, p. 976, citing as authority for the forty-six presbyters a letter of Pope Cornelius, *ap. Eusebius, Hist. Eccles.* VI, xliii, 11 (PG 20, 621A).
 7. A.E. Harvey, *Priest or President ?*, p. 24.
 8. J.-M.R. Tillard, *Church of Churches, The Ecclesiology of Communion*, p. 186, referring to Cyprian, *Ep.* iv, PL 4, 236. (This was also cited by Dix, quoted in Chapter III, p. 40.) The 'circumstances' were the imprisonment of confessors. We saw in chapter II that already Ignatius was prepared to allow the bishop, the normal Eucharistic president, to appoint someone else to take his place.
 9. G. Dix, *Jurisdiction in the Early Church*, p. 60. It must be borne in mind that *παροικία*, from which our word 'parish' is derived, signified in the early centuries what we now call a 'diocese.' For more about *χωρεπίσκοποι* see Lebreton and Zeiller, *op. cit.*, pp. 982f.
 10. G. Dix, *op. cit.*, p. 60. What Dix wrote needs to be balanced by what is said on p. 181 of *Episcopal Ministry*, where mention is made of 'the *chorepiscopus* (literally country-bishop) ... Originally *chorepiscopi* were, as their name suggests, bishops of villages or country areas who ministered on behalf of the Metropolitan ... The *chorepiscopi* are a legacy of a stage when it was unclear whether the expanding local community could best be served by priests as a team of assistants to the diocesan bishop, or by dividing the area into further dioceses, each with its own bishop.'
 11. Thus from the fourth century the cathedral became known as *ecclesia major, ecclesia senior, or ecclesia catholica*, to distinguish it from parish churches (SC 21 [*Pilgrimage of Etheria*], Paris, reprinted 1957, p. 148).
 12. A.G. Hebert, *Apostle and Bishop*, p. 67.
 13. K.E. Kirk (ed.), *The Apostolic Ministry*, p. 11. The quotation comes from the introductory section, contributed by Kirk.
 14. A.G. Hebert, *op. cit.*, p. 67. The words are almost the same as those of Dix, 'The Ministry in the Early Church', in *The Apostolic Ministry*, p. 282f.
 15. Ignatius, *Magnesians* VI, 1; Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 153, with n. 49; cf. also the comment in ch. III p. 40 on what Dix wrote concerning Cyprian's *Ep.* v. 2.
 16. Cf. Tillard's remark above about presbyters as occasional eucharistic presidents (p. 47).
 17. *Being as Communion*, p. 250 [Zizioulas' italics].
 18. *Episcopal Ministry* states that 'the diocese remains in principle a single eucharistic community in Anglican polity ...' (p. 88), but notes that there has not been a consensus among all Christian traditions about 'the definition of the "local Church".' (p. 280).
 19. *Being as Communion*, p. 250f. (Zizioulas' italics). Similarly, 'The gradual individualization of the eucharist with the introduction of private eucharistic prayers into the structure of the liturgy and finally with the prevalence of the "private mass" in the West, represents a historical development which should be examined in close connection with the development of ecclesiology.' (*op. cit.*, p. 152, n. 40.)
 20. 'The Idea of Primacy in Orthodox Ecclesiology', in *The Primacy of Peter*, p. 39, n. 23.
 21. Thus the changes are noted, but virtually without comment, both in *The Priesthood of the Ordained Ministry*, and in *Episcopal Ministry*.

22. 'The development of eucharistic worship: tradition and change', *Sobornost* 18:1, 1996, p. 12f.
23. John Chrysostom, preaching in Antioch, reminded his hearers of the punishment in store for unworthy communicants on the basis of *I Cor.* 11. 30, and then in answer to an imagined objection that this could not apply to a person who only communicated annually, insisted that one is defiled even by coming once to the sacrament unworthily, whereas there is salvation in coming often and worthily, *hom in I Tim.*, 5, 3, PG 62, 529; John Cassian referred to monks whose misunderstanding of the sanctity of the Eucharist led them to communicate only once a year, *Conlationes*. XXIII, xxi, SC 64, Paris, 1959, p. 167; Ambrose thought it necessary to warn people recently baptized not to follow the Greek custom of annual communion (*quemadmodum graeci in oriente facere consueverunt*), *De Sacramentis* V, SC 25, Paris, 1950, p. 95; in N. Italy communion every Sunday, and daily in Lent, was still being advocated in the ninth century, *Quatorze Homélies du IX^e Siècle*, ed. and tr. P. Mercier, SC 161, Paris, 1970, p. 192.
24. *Conlationes*, I, xx, SC 42, Paris, 1955, p. 103. In Symeon the Studite (tenth century) there can be found a rare exception to this attitude amongst monks, for he does not condemn some spiritual fathers who, he says, hold out the prospect of priesthood to their young disciples, in order to encourage them – SC 460, *Asc.* 37, p. 120.
25. '*De diaconibus quos cognovimus multis locis offerre: Placuit minime fieri debere*', Council of Arles, XVI [XV], *E.O.M.I.A.*, (ed. C.H. Turner) Oxford, 1939, 1, p. 392; Hefele-Leclercq, p. 275ff. It is necessary to add that, when citing this, W.H. Freestone did not insist that it can only be understood of celebrations of the Eucharist by deacons, because *offerre* is also used to mean the administering of the chalice. (*The Sacrament Reserved*, Alcuin Club Collections XXI, London, 1917, p. 221, n. 4)
26. 'The pride of the deacons at Rome and elsewhere was not an unusual subject of complaint', W.H. Freestone, *op. cit.*, p. 223.
27. *quid enim facit, excepta ordinatione, episcopus quod presbyter non faciat? ... omne quod rarum est, plus appetitur. ... diaconos paucitas honorabiles, presbyteros turba contemptibiles facit.* – *Ep.* cxlvi, PL 22, 1194. J.M. Barnett, *op. cit.*, p. 104, cites Chrysostom and others who at times minimised the distinction between bishops and presbyters.
28. 'The Idea of Primacy in Orthodox Ecclesiology', in *The Primacy of Peter*, p. 31.
29. From the passage quoted above, p. 50.; v. also *Being as Communion* p. 121 for Zizioulas' stress on the necessity for the participation of the laity in the Eucharist.
30. A. M. Ramsey, quoted in Chapter I, p. 14.
31. 'On Ecclesial Conciliarity', in *The Legacy of St Vladimir*, p. 213.
32. N. Afanassieff, *L'Eglise du Saint-Esprit*, Paris, 1975, p. 327.
33. *Ibid.*, p. 328.
34. R. Hannaford, 'Ecclesiology and Communion' in *The Future of Anglicanism*, p. 82.
35. *The Diaconate*, p. 3.
36. Dix, 'The Ministry in the Early Church', in *The Apostolic Ministry*, p. 284f. Very similar language about 'hierarchical degrees of ministry' can be found in *For such a time as this*, p.9. In fact already in 325 the Council of Nicaea (canon 18) had been concerned about manifestations of diaconal presumption – cf. also the Council of Arles to which reference has just been made.
37. *Didache*, XIII, 1 - 7, XV, 1f.
38. *Ep.* lxvi, PL 4, 411A (... *ut qui in in ecclesia Domini ordinatione clerica promoventur, in nullo ab administratione divina avocentur, nec molestiis et*

Holy Orders and Completeness of the Church

negotiis saecularibus alligentur, sed in honore sportulantium fratrum, tamquam decimas ex fratribus accipientes, ab altari et sacrificiis non recedant, sed die ac nocte coelestibus rebus et spiritualibus serviant.)

39. *Being as Communion*, p. 163f. [Zizioulas' italics].

40. G. Dix, *Jurisdiction in the Early Church*, p. 17f.

41. *Ibid.*, p. 20f.

42. *Ibid.*, p. 18.

43. G.R. Evans, *Authority in the Church: a Challenge for Anglicans*, p. 30.

44. *Op. cit.*, p. 190.

45. *Adv. Haer.*, I, 10, 2, SC 264, Paris, 1979, p. 160. Cf. the importance of the bishop, seated on his throne, as teacher, remarked on by Dix in chapter II, p. 28.

46. See for instance *In I Sam. hom.* 5, 1, 22, SC 328, Paris, 1986, p. 172f. Here Origen asks the bishop to choose which of four passages he should expound in the sermon. According to Eusebius, the bishops specifically permitted him to devote himself to the interpretation of Scripture (τὰ τῆς τῶν θείων γραφῶν ἐρμηνείας ... πράττειν συνεχῶρουν), *Hist. Eccles.*, VI, xxvii, SC 41, Paris, 1955, p. 129.

47. Eusebius, *Hist. Eccles.*, VI, xix, SC 41, Paris, 1955, p. 118f. Much later Jerome censured haughty bishops who, when themselves present, did not allow presbyters to preach: *Pessimae consuetudinis est in quibusdam ecclesiis tacere presbyteros et praesentibus episcopis non loqui, quasi aut invideant aut non dignentur audire.* (*Ep.* lii, 7, CSEL liv, p. 428.)

48. *Episcopal Ministry*, p. 252f.

49. *Jurisdiction in the Early Church*, p. 20f.

50. Chapter I, p. 14.

51. 'The Ministry in the Early Church', in *The Apostolic Ministry*, p. 295.

V FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS – THEIR SIGNIFICANCE FOR ECCLESIOLOGY

The last chapter gave some idea of the extensive modifications which the Church's underlying structure underwent in, roughly speaking, the fourth century. The functions of bishops and presbyters were very significantly altered, but what took place was never subjected to any thorough scrutiny, although from time to time the changes may perhaps have been discussed from the practical point of view. Serious consequences have resulted from the fact that throughout the Church's history theological scrutiny has seldom if ever been recognised as an essential accompaniment of changes affecting those in holy orders. Yet at various times after this early period further and far-reaching modifications have continued to be brought about.

The origin of a good deal that we are about to consider can be traced back to the ecclesiological error touched on towards the end of the last chapter. Augustine's theology, wrote Dix,

conceives of an 'order' almost exclusively with reference to the individual who exercises it, and not with reference to the Church in which it is exercised as the fulfilment of one function in an organic society ... Augustine's theory is in itself a proof that by *c.* A.D. 400 that idea [*sc.* the old, jealously corporate notion of the local Church] was extinct as a living force.¹

Dix thus lays on Augustine much of the responsibility for the individualising of the concept of holy orders, which has for a long time been virtually unquestioned by the majority of Christians. This, by

now almost instinctive, understanding of holy orders manifests itself when people argue that gifted and devout women are somehow denied their rightful status as individuals in the Church, if it is maintained that they cannot be ordained to the presbyterate. And the concept has been noticeably and disastrously influential as regards the episcopate, giving rise to the tendency to think of a bishop less as the *persona* of a local church,² than as the holder of a special rank or dignity within a national or international Church. Thus in the Roman Catholic *Codex Iuris Canonici* (1983) Canon 351 lays down that, on being appointed cardinal, a man must be consecrated a bishop, if he is not one already.³ Canon 376 accepts that there will be titular as well as diocesan bishops, and accordingly major ecclesiastical civil servants, that is to say high-ranking officials of the Roman Curia, are in many cases archbishops or bishops of sees *in partibus infidelium*. These sees in theory give a bishop a connection with a local church, as ecclesiology requires, but in reality they are places where, although there was formerly a Christian community, there is one no longer. Somewhat similarly, though on a much smaller scale, the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople is assisted by a synod of bishops, most of whom have only nominal dioceses, places inhabited no longer by Orthodox Christians.

T. Hopko has well depicted the theological confusion which arises when, for whatever reason, there is a departure from the 'Ignatian' principle:

The practice of assigning each bishop a 'See' even when it does not historically exist, testifies to the traditional vision on this point. There is, of course, the question of the 'chorepiskopoi' whose ministry, like that of modern 'auxiliary' or 'vicar' bishops (and even presbyters from very early in church history) was to bring the service of the community's head to members of the body when for practical reasons the bishop himself could not personally be present. But whatever way the issue of the relationship between bishops, titular bishops, vicar bishops, country-bishops and presbyters is to be historically and theologically understood and resolved, what seems to be agreed upon in contemporary Orthodox thinking is that each local church has one head who represents the one God and the one Christ ...⁴

In these words one can see the loyal Orthodox Hopko struggling to reconcile an ecclesiological principle, still theoretically maintained in Orthodoxy, with its erosion in practice. He touches on a variety of expedients, introduced doubtless under the plea of pastoral necessity, while their ecclesiological implications are ignored. This will be found relevant to what is to be discussed in the next paragraph, but it is quoted here because of what it says by implication about episcopal assistants to popes and patriarchs, and about a prelate who has been added to the staff of the archbishop of Canterbury. Fairly recently the post of 'bishop at Lambeth' was created. (The first to hold this position was Ross Hook, invited in 1980 by Robert Runcie to move from the see of Bradford.) This prelate has no diocesan responsibilities but acts as a personal administrative assistant to the archbishop of Canterbury. In conformity with tradition he ought to be a deacon, but the importation of a bishop shows the power of the misguided secular notions of status which have invaded the Church, causing it to feel that high-ranking people making contact with Lambeth will not take a deacon seriously and cannot be expected to do so. In this connection it is interesting that *For such a time as this* suggests that a bishop's chaplain might well be a deacon,⁵ but this suggestion is very likely to fall foul of the same prejudice.

Further examples of bishops without either a diocese or a well-defined particular local church over which they preside, are the holders of suffragan sees in England. Before the Reformation, bishops of the sometimes very extensive English dioceses had been assisted, in their discharge of duties which required an episcopal minister, by 'Irish diocesans who preferred to live in England, or abbots given "titular" dioceses in parts of the world which were not under Christian rule.'⁶ This practice came to an end with the break from Rome, but Henry VIII by an Act of Parliament named twenty-six places as nominal sees for suffragan bishops who could assist the diocesans. Several such bishops were consecrated in the sixteenth century, but the practice then fell into abeyance until it was revived in 1870, since when the number of suffragans has greatly increased. Although their titles have preserved by a kind of ecclesiastical fiction the principle that one must be consecrated as bishop of the Church of some defined locality, in practice they have often had no special connection with their titular sees, but have acted as 'episcopal curates' anywhere in the diocese.

Holy Orders and Completeness of the Church

Similarly diocesans are sometimes helped by retired bishops from elsewhere, who come to live in their dioceses and are authorised to minister as assistant bishops.

By about 1970, however, there were signs of a welcome development: some members of the Church were expressing doubt as to whether this system could be regarded as ecclesologically defensible, and some diocesan bishops were beginning *unofficially* to sub-divide their dioceses into separate areas in each of which a suffragan was granted a large measure of pastoral responsibility. A working party in 1971, while insisting that 'the episcopacy that the Church of England commends to others is a bishop with a distinctive relationship to a group of persons, 'recommended that for "large urban areas" there should be "a *college of bishops* within a diocese". In the words of the Report, the result 'might be expressed in the aphorism – *the college of bishops* is the bishop of the diocese'.⁷

Subsequently, in 1973, a report to the General Synod, *Episcopacy in the Church of England*, raised questions which called for theological consideration, but when it was debated there was little evidence of a wish for a radical reformation of the system. The majority in the Synod was ready to accept that a bishop might share his responsibilities with suffragans, as long as he really gave them the opportunity to exercise true *episcopé*.⁸

There followed the setting up in 1977 of a permanent commission which, amongst other things, may authorise a diocesan bishop legally to delegate certain of his powers to a suffragan, and divide his diocese into episcopal areas which can have their own area synods. On this basis in 1979 approval was given to a proposal to re-organize the diocese of London so that the area bishops might have real episcopal authority in their respective areas, while for most administrative purposes the diocese continued to function as a single entity. There is obviously better theological justification for area bishops than for 'episcopal curates'. Nevertheless, 'suffragans remain something of an anomaly', as G.R. Evans admitted, and after some discussion she concluded that 'the problem raised by the existence of suffragan bishops as permanent officers within a diocese is that of the challenge they pose to the rule of "one bishop, one diocese"'.⁹

Thus, whenever a diocesan is dependent on the help of suffragan or area bishops, one has to ask: Where can one find the local church with, according to the 'Ignatian' concept, *one* bishop at its head? The bishop is no longer the 'one', the focus of diocesan unity, if he is no more than the leader of a team of fellow-bishops, for this is a kind of episcopal presbyterianism. Moreover, 'episcopal areas' have quite a long way to go if they are effectively to become real local Churches. Besides this, if the diocesan bishop does not retain for himself an 'area' which is his particular responsibility, he becomes an ecclesiastical anomaly, an archbishop without a diocese of his own.

The anomaly of a bishop without any local Church over which to preside, has been in a sense taken further in the (Anglican) Episcopal Church of the USA. Here there is no archiepiscopal see, but the governing body, the General Convention, elects a bishop to be 'Presiding Bishop', who then ceases to be the bishop of any local church. In the Anglican Church of Canada also the Presiding Bishop or Primate has no diocesan responsibilities.¹⁰ Again, it might be held that in another way the Church of South India, on coming into existence in 1947, failed to emphasise the theological requirement that the office of a bishop must be understood primarily in relation to a particular local church. For some reason a decision was made to abandon the style of 'Bishop of Such-and-such a place', and replace it by 'Bishop of the Church of South India in Such-and-such a place'. Although through consecration the bishops to whom Ignatius wrote were 'of the Catholic Church', he would have insisted that they were primarily bishops 'in' the church of Ephesus and so on.

This last example may not appear very serious, but for an instance of one way in which in the course of history the 'Ignatian' idea of the bishop was gravely distorted, the practice of the Celtic Church in Ireland may be adduced. As *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* formerly stated,

There arose a curious type of feudalism, based on property and carrying spiritual authority, whereby heads of land-owning communities, such as abbots and abbesses, and even laymen, exercised a considerable authority over bishops, who were consecrated in large numbers without dioceses. ... In 795 when the invasions of the Northmen began, Irish scholars and

Holy Orders and Completeness of the Church

ecclesiastics went abroad in large numbers, among them many non-diocesan bishops, whose irregular ministrations proved a considerable nuisance.¹¹

Although Ireland was somewhat isolated, this deformation of episcopacy in its Church is perhaps attributable to the influence of what Dix regards as Augustine's mistaken theology. Certainly, the proliferation of non-diocesan bishops exemplified the understanding 'of an "order" almost exclusively with reference to the individual who exercises it, and not with reference to the Church in which it is exercised'.

A different instance of a somewhat questionable individualisation of episcopacy can be found at the present day in the Coptic Church,¹² which has as members of its Holy Synod several who have the title of 'General Bishop', in some cases being designated as 'for Youth' or 'for Public, Ecumenical and Social Services'. (To use by anticipation terms we shall soon be meeting, one might say that some of these bishops have a 'personal prelature', with responsibility for a 'unit' which is equivalent to a local Church.) History thus shows that while preserving the 'historic episcopate', many Churches have in a variety of ways abandoned the traditional position described by Dix when he wrote:

A 'Church' implied a 'bishop' as the *sine qua non* of its organic life, just as a 'bishop' implied a 'Church' in which he fulfilled the *episcopé*. Either was meaningless without the other ...¹³

Ramsey's words, previously quoted in Chapter III, will bear repeating here:

The tests of a true development are whether it bears witness to the Gospel, whether it expresses the general consciousness of the Christians, and whether it serves the organic unity of the Body in all its parts.¹⁴

Now it is notorious that in the West during and after the Reformation the unity of the Church was destroyed and various denominations or confessions came into being. But this happened at a time when the

‘Ignatian’ model of the episcopate had long ago been the victim of various changes which were not true developments but deformations. Far from serving the organic unity of the Body, they were changes which are to be viewed as examples of the working out of a tragic principle. It is this: changes which blur the perception of the bishop as the ‘icon’ of God and of Christ, and as the ‘one’, the visible focus of the unity of the many members of the local church, such changes are theologically at fault just because they are responsible for this blurring, and therefore they are likely to become sources of disunity.

Returning to the present day and to the Church of England, something must be said about Provincial Episcopal Visitors – ‘flying bishops’, as they are popularly called. There are two of these in the Province of Canterbury and one in that of York, and they minister to clergy and parishes unable theologically to accept women priests and the sacramental ministry of bishops who ordain them. In continuing testimony to the traditional principle that one must nominally be consecrated bishop of the Church in a definite place, they are styled the Bishops of Ebbsfleet, Richborough and Beverley. With the permission of diocesans, they minister, pastorally and sacramentally, to clergy and congregations who ask them to do so. As one ‘flying bishop’ put it, ‘We have stumbled on something very like what our Roman brethren call “personal prelatures”.’ He had explained this term in an article written earlier:

The Second Vatican Council envisaged in ‘Personal Prelatures’, a new Church institution, and what the Council permitted was developed by legislation under Pope Paul VI and in the 1983 Code of Canon Law. Its principal aim was to provide pastoral care for particular groups of people. It was envisaged, for instance, that there might be bishops appointed for immigrant groups who would have a personal prelature of this sort.¹⁵

However, the Act of Synod and the system of ‘flying bishops’, although tentatively commended by the Eames Commission,¹⁶ has come under criticism, at any rate from the champions of women priests. According to Canon Philip Crowe, ‘Flying bishops make absolutely no sense at all in any reasonable theology of the Church’,

and in his opinion it would have been far better 'if the Church had been theologically honest and allowed opponents to make up their minds and go'.¹⁷ Some who hold such opinions have published a book¹⁸ in which they argue at greater length the theological case for rescinding the Act of Synod. It must indeed be admitted that the ministry of the Provincial Episcopal Visitors is at variance with tradition, but so also is the ordination of women to the presbyterate. Furthermore, as I am about to point out, it is impossible under present conditions to expect to be able rigidly to uphold in practice the ecclesiological principle of one bishop in one locality, a principle which in a variety of ways has for long not been maintained in practice.

Approaching the subject from a different angle, S.L. Edwards, a priest of E.C.U.S.A., has written that, as a result of the dissolution of Christendom, the Church needs to come to a fresh understanding of itself. Then, having observed that in the fourth century 'a model of the episcopate that could be described as paterfamilial and pastoral was exchanged for one that was fundamentally monarchical and imperial', he goes on to urge with regard to the episcopate today,

an intentional recapture of the pre-Constantinian paterfamilial model. This will necessarily parallel the replacement of mainly institutional and political concepts of the Church herself with an organic and familial model.¹⁹

Actually even in the days when episcopacy was 'paterfamilial' and not 'imperial', it was, as we have seen, based on a geographical unit, most often a city. The point, however, with which Edwards is concerned is the style in which bishops then could, and did, exercise their ministry. With that in mind, in an age when people move from place to place or from country to country to an extent unknown in earlier times, it is less revolutionary than it seems at first sight, to suggest that bishops might have personal responsibility for 'Church units' rather than for local Churches. The 'units' might be defined groups (somewhat as 'Youth' has been granted a bishop by the Copts), or simply communities made up of persons choosing to belong to them. In either case their bishops would not be theoretically responsible for all the Christians in a particular local area.²⁰

In fact, of course, this would be little more than recognition of what is in many places the existing state of affairs because of Christian disunity. Thus, although at the restoration of the Roman Catholic hierarchy in England in 1850, sees were deliberately chosen which were not the same as those which the Church of England had inherited from pre-Reformation days, the subsequent establishing of new Anglican dioceses has resulted in there being in some cases two bishops with identical territorial titles. There are from the Anglican point of view, two validly consecrated bishops of Portsmouth, even though geographically their dioceses are not identical. In practice, then, it could reasonably be said that each of these men exercises a 'personal prelature' for those Christians who accept him as their bishop, whether or not he acts in a 'paterfamilial' way. Again, in places where there are Orthodox Christians of different ethnic origin, one often finds parallel episcopal jurisdictions, which in effect function as 'personal prelatures' for separate groups of Christians, who are mostly in communion with each other, unlike Anglicans and Roman Catholics. Moreover within the Church of England there is a bishop who is 'the Archbishop of Canterbury's Episcopal Representative to H.M. Forces', and within Anglicanism on the continent of Europe there are two groups of chaplaincies, each with its own bishop: since 1980 one of the dioceses of the Church of England has been the 'Diocese in Europe' (with a diocesan, a suffragan and numerous assistant bishops), while the E.C.U.S.A. has a 'Bishop in Charge of the Convocation of American Episcopal Churches in Europe', with his cathedral in Paris.

Episcopal Ministry, it is worth noting, remarks that several meetings of the Lambeth Conference have stressed the importance of the basic principle of one bishop in one territorial diocese, although as long ago as 1867 'it was allowed that there might be "peculiar cases" of race or language'.²¹ In any case, whether or not valid precedents can be found, what the Church of England 'has stumbled on' deserves serious consideration in order to determine if in a well-devised pattern of 'paterfamilial episcopate' there might (*pace* Canon Crowe) be found an ecclesologically satisfactory line of development. Perhaps in some such way the essentials of the 'Ignatian' model could be rediscovered for the twenty-first century. Meanwhile it is encouraging to see a few signs of some awareness of the problems, for to quote again from *Episcopal Ministry*,

Holy Orders and Completeness of the Church

There appears to be as much doubt about the theological status and the place in the Church's order of a bishop without designated jurisdiction within the Roman Catholic Church as is evidenced within the Anglican Communion in relation to suffragan bishops. There are also, in parts of Orthodoxy, Assistant Bishops functioning in a Diocese rather like Anglican suffragans. ... (J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 197, n. 99, speaks of titular bishops in the Orthodox Churches as 'a grave anomaly'.)²²

Episcopal Ministry, however, had earlier struck a despairing note when it conceded that,

There is always a tension in the Church's life between developed theological principle and the meeting of practical needs which sometimes seems to run on ahead of the theology, and has to be explained and justified *ex post facto*.²³

This provokes the question of what kind of justification can actually be adduced for abandoning the 'icon' of the one bishop with its theological meaning, and putting in its place 'a grave anomaly'. Moreover it should not be forgotten that this 'anomaly' would never have arisen, unless the idea had become generally accepted that an 'order' in the Church has its primary reference to an individual who exercises it.

Before this section is brought to an end, some mention should perhaps be made of the ways in which bishops have been and are chosen. In pre-Constantinian days nobody disputed that it was the right and duty of each local church, when its bishop died, to elect a suitable successor, who was then consecrated by bishops of neighbouring churches. But naturally, as soon as the Church in the Roman empire was accepted as the 'established' Church, a bishop, particularly the bishop of a great city, became a man of some importance in civil society, at least in his own area. As the organs of municipal government became less and less effective in representing the people of a town or city, the bishops, elected by the clergy and people of the place, found themselves called on to undertake in the secular sphere quasi-judicial and quasi-gubernatorial functions. Consequently, episcopal elections

might become entangled with controversies of great interest to citizens, and could thus excite much public interest. They sometimes provided opportunities for intrigue and bribery, and were occasionally disfigured by violence. A good illustration of popular excitement and the concern of the authorities to prevent rioting is furnished by the well-known story of how Ambrose was chosen as bishop of Milan, because he was present in his capacity as governor of Aemilia-Liguria and so responsible for keeping order at the time of an episcopal election.

But the concern of the authorities was not simply the preservation of public order when the elections of bishops became a matter of interest to all the inhabitants of a town or city, the great majority of them now being Christians, at least in name. It was natural that the emperor, or the members of the imperial family, should often have a deep interest in the choice of a new occupant of the see of Constantinople. There, and elsewhere for a variety of different reasons, the voters might, and did, find themselves subjected to pressure from those in power. Or again, at times of controversy, the leaders of opposing factions in the Church, often themselves bishops of other sees, would sometimes seek to promote the election of a man known to be on their side. Later, monarchs naturally wished for a decisive say in the choice of bishops, when under the feudal system in Western Europe these were often men who by virtue of their ability and education could be used as ministers in the secular sense of the word, and who in any case had baronial status.

Some Roman Catholics today complain that the choice of their bishops has become far too much a prerogative of the Pope, which in many cases means that the Curia gives effect to what it considers to be the papal wishes, or perhaps to its own wishes which it ascribes to the Pope. Thus an Irish priest writes about

the issue of whether and why individual dioceses should not have a major say in appointing their own bishops, as in the early church, with Rome having, perhaps, a veto. There seems to be no good reason today why this should not be the case.²⁴

In England, as was to be expected, the monarch, or the government in office, insisted for centuries on having a decisive say in the choice of bishops, because when the House of Lords was a powerful though

comparatively small body, bishops played an important role in Parliament. During the mediaeval period, in England and elsewhere, the right to elect the bishop, which had formerly belonged to the whole Christian community, passed to the Cathedral Chapter. The king then frequently intervened in order to secure the man he wanted, and in 1533 Henry VIII, by Act of Parliament, bestowed on the crown the legal right to nominate to the Chapter the single candidate to be elected when a diocesan see became vacant. In theory, this is still the situation; in practice, however, since 1977 the Church of England has enjoyed a substantial amount of power in connection with the choice of diocesan bishops, for its Crown Appointments Commission submits two names to the Prime Minister, who by convention then advises the Queen to nominate to the Chapter the first of these.²⁵ Thus in theory, and to some extent in practice, the state continues to be involved in the choice of diocesan bishops for the Church of England, and one must assume that, in spite of protests by some members of the General Synod, there is likely not to be any substantial alteration so long as the present form of establishment remains. Bishops of suffragan sees, including Provincial Episcopal Visitors, are chosen by the Crown from two names submitted by the diocesan who is requesting the appointment. Anglican provinces outside England have established their own systems of election, and their different constitutions make provision in different ways for diocesan and provincial electors to take part.

A study of Church history suggests that as yet no perfect system for the choice of bishops has been found, for each of those which have been tried has shown itself to have both advantages and drawbacks.

Moving on to consider developments affecting the presbyterate, let me first recapitulate what has so far been noted. Already in the third century there can be seen the earliest beginnings of the process which soon led to presbyters being no longer regarded as members of a corporate body so much as men individually having certain defined powers and duties. However, as regards the pre-Nicene Church in general Dix aptly expresses the situation:

A presbyter permanently separated from his presbytery has as an individual no function or status, rather as we do not regard a single member of a committee as having any personal authority.²⁶

It may reasonably be argued that a change in the 'iconic' perception of presbyters was inevitable when they were increasingly seen to be functioning as individuals who took the place of the bishop in local congregations, and less and less acting corporately as the committee, presided over by the bishop, which governed and administered the local church. Again, somewhat later with dioceses of vast extent, such as many in England, it was only to be expected that the presbyter – let us now style him priest – should come to undertake for his parishioners almost every function fulfilled by a bishop in the pre-Constantinian era. Nevertheless, when the parish became for most practical purposes the local unit of the whole Church, the 'Ignatian' structure of ministries was significantly altered, with consequences for the understanding of Christian presbyterate/priesthood which were regrettable.

When the Church in a region was well supplied with priests, the incumbent, the man in charge of a parish (the rector, vicar, parish priest, or whatever title he had), might commonly not be alone, but have at least one fellow-priest as his colleague and assistant. Again, nowadays a shortage of clergy has led in some places in the Church of England to the linking together of two or more parishes which are looked after by a 'team ministry'. Yet in both cases there is, at the most, only a vestige of the corporate structure, which was originally of the essence of the presbyterate in each local church, for in a single parish the incumbent is much more than a *primus inter pares*, and a 'team ministry' is responsible for more than one Christian community. An indication, however, that some Anglicans might support a move towards the pre-mediaeval position is found in a book by an Evangelical, M. Green. He remarks that 'we never find a presbyter in the singular in the New Testament. Always he is a member of a team.'²⁷ Furthermore, he urges that

We must train local presbyters. These will, if we follow the New Testament, be tried people of experience. ... Together a group of them will be able to constitute an effective all-round corporate presbyterate. They might fittingly be ordained by the bishop once he is satisfied of their competence to lead in the local situation.²⁸

Thus Green, whether or not exhibiting a conscious wish to hark back to the 'Ignatian' pattern, is making a suggestion which would go a long way towards restoring the presbyterate 'as a council of God and as a college of the apostles'.²⁹ The Roman Catholic F. Lobinger, however, explicitly denies that he is motivated by the desire for 'a return to something practised before', when he nevertheless urges the institution of what he recognises as resembling the collective presbyterate of the early Church.³⁰

Proposals such as these I welcome, but it is disturbing that, in *The Priesthood of the Ordained Ministry*, the Church of England's Faith and Order Advisory Group quoted approvingly from the preface to the proposed *Anglican-Methodist Ordinal*: 'It is in this way the priesthood of bishop and presbyter should be understood.'³¹ This obliterates the distinction between the two orders, and is another example of the failure to recognise the undesirable consequences for ecclesiology of the transformation which the presbyterate has undergone.

There is no need to say much about deacons after the fourth century. What, sadly, the diaconate became in the West is exemplified by some words in a collect which the *Book of Common Prayer* (1662) gives for use at the end of the rite for ordaining deacons: 'that they may so well behave themselves in this inferior Office, that they may be found worthy to be called unto the higher Ministries in the Church.' (This wording may have been influenced by the Roman prayer which will be mentioned in the next chapter, but which did not in reality refer to advancement to the presbyterate.) Furthermore, a rubric printed at the end of the service clearly views the diaconate as an apprenticeship. It prescribes that the newly ordained is to be told that 'he must continue in that Office of a Deacon the space of a whole year ... to the intent that he may be perfect, and well expert in the things pertaining to the Ecclesiastical Administration', and then 'if he be found faithful and diligent, he may be admitted by his Diocesan to the Order of Priesthood.' This long-standing Western custom of down-grading the diaconate is well illustrated by the fact that a recent book by R. Greenwood, entitled *Transforming Priesthood – A New Theology of Mission and Ministry*, does not include in its index the words 'deacon' or 'diaconate'. It is true that the book is 'about' priesthood, but under the heading 'laity, ministry of', there are eight references. One is thus

led to conclude that the author considered the diaconate as of little interest or importance.³²

Perhaps, however, the tide has begun to turn. At a meeting of the General Synod of the Church of England in November 1998, Bishop S. Sykes (of Ely) said that lifelong deacons could spread the church's message as youth workers, social workers and in industry, commerce, tourism and local government. A lay member from Norwich described the diaconate as 'a church order, but out in the world', and the Synod voted overwhelmingly to review the role of deacons. Moreover, as Bishop of Monmouth, a diocese of the Anglican Church in Wales, Dr Rowan Williams wrote and circulated 'A Note on the Diaconate', on the subject of 'the decision to ordain certain people to a non-stipendiary deacon's ministry'. Towards the end of this he stated:

The development of the diaconal ministry – or rather the restoration of a proper diaconal ministry as something more than a preparatory stage for the priesthood – has happened in a somewhat piecemeal way, in response to local needs and particular callings. However, I believe that it is proving itself in practice, and a co-ordinated pattern is emerging.³³

Already in 1990, that is before the Church of England ordained women as priests, the authors of *Episcopal Ministry* had recognised that 'some deacons of both sexes may have a vocation to the diaconate for life'.³⁴ Most women deacons in the Church of England received ordination to the priesthood as soon as this became possible, but there are still a few women who have been ordained deacons but have not accepted ordination as priests. Furthermore, as was mentioned in Chapter I, the Roman Catholic Church has for several years now been ordaining mature men to the diaconate with no prospect of ordination to the priesthood for those who are married, so long as celibacy is maintained as a requirement for priestly ordination (except in the case of married ex-Anglican bishops or priests). It must be admitted that some anecdotal evidence suggests that unfortunately many of these 'permanent deacons' would really prefer to be priests, if they could be. Nevertheless the actual fulfilling by such men of a diaconal ministry may help towards a revival of meaningful diaconate in places where it has for too long been in abeyance.

In this context it is worth quoting the words of Lawrence Cross, an archdeacon of the Melkite Church. (This is an Eastern-rite Church in communion with Rome but in many respects maintaining Orthodox tradition and practice.) He wrote:

A priest is not a deacon tadpole who metamorphosed into a frog, nor is a deacon almost a priest and not quite a lay person. The diaconate is one of the three sacred orders which make up the threefold ministry of the ecclesial hierarchy. ...

What do the Latins mean by a 'permanent' diaconate anyway? Is there an impermanent one? Why not talk about a permanent priest or a permanent bishop? ³⁵

What is remarkable is the persistence of the diaconate in some form in Roman Catholicism and Anglicanism, despite the fact that Anglicans, to cite them as an example, have generally shown few real signs of recognising in practice 'how necessary [it] is in the Church of Christ', although so described in the first rubric in the Ordinal of the *Book of Common Prayer*. Such persistence should serve to facilitate the meaningful revival of an order which preceding chapters have shown to be of great significance for the plenitude of the Church.

It is interesting to observe the official position of (British) Methodism set forth in the Introduction to the Ordination Services in *Methodist Worship*, published in 1999. Having declared that it 'has received and transmitted two orders of ministry, the presbyteral and the diaconal', it goes on to speak of 'Presbyters, usually called Ministers'. The next paragraph states:

More recently, the Methodist Diaconal Order has developed from the Wesley Deaconess Order into an order of ministry for both women and men. Deacons are ordained to a ministry of service and pastoral care and seek to equip God's people for service in the world. In the Methodist Church, diaconal ministry is an office in its own right rather than a step to the office of presbyter. For both presbyters and deacons, ordination is to a permanent lifelong office of ministry.

One might quarrel with the last sentence, if one favours the ordaining of future presbyters/priests and bishops to what may be called a 'transitional diaconate', as a sign that all Christian ministers are servants. Apart from this, although not in the context of the traditional pattern of the three holy orders besides that of the Christian laity, we can here see in Methodism a genuine and encouraging revival of what one might call a meaningful diaconate. However, if Anglicans and others were to follow the Methodist example, that would not necessarily overcome the questionable development which Dix believed had already taken place in the time of St Augustine, namely the concept of an 'order' as something possessed by an individual. This itself was the result of the loss of a sense of the corporate nature of the local Church, and it is likely that until a sound ecclesiology based on this sense is regained, a proper theology of holy orders cannot be expected.

We have been looking at the acceptance of changes which have impaired that completeness of the local church in which Christians through attending the Sunday Eucharist once participated. In the West, in the Middle Ages, the word 'Church' was used to refer not to all members of the *laos*, the people, of God, but only to those who were 'clerks' (*clerici*), or who belonged to one of the religious orders. Yet at the same period, in spite of this abuse of language, at the Sunday Eucharist the order of laity was of course in evidence; there might too be a deacon taking his appointed part in the liturgy, but in churches of Western Europe³⁶ deacons became rarer as the diaconate was more and more treated as merely an apprenticeship for the priesthood (when the ceremonial of a High Mass required a deacon, the role was commonly fulfilled by a priest wearing diaconal vestments); the priest was now an individual minister, no longer primarily a member of a Christian *sanhedrin*³⁷ (for that had to all intents and purposes ceased to exist), but a man who had the function of presiding at the Eucharist as the *alter ego* of his bishop; this bishop might be miles away in his cathedral, or visiting some other part of his diocese, or as a baron of the realm being in attendance on his sovereign, or perhaps acting as one of that sovereign's senior 'civil servants'. Thus no longer could the four orders be seen to be joining together at the ordinary Sunday Eucharist. Moreover, they met in what was regarded as to all intents an purposes

Holy Orders and Completeness of the Church

as the 'local church', although it was not the cathedral but one of the many parish churches in the diocese.

These defects appear not to have much disturbed the English reformers of the sixteenth century, the Caroline Divines in the 17th or the Tractarians in the 19th, in spite of the fact that all of them sought to go back to the past, behind mediaeval distortions, in order to rediscover a sound theology. It was Calvin who actually reproduced most nearly the 'Ignatian' pattern of ministries in the Churches in which his influence prevailed, even though he abandoned the 'historic episcopate'. K.D. Mackenzie, a bishop of the Episcopal Church of Scotland (Anglican), wrote concerning the established Church of Scotland (Presbyterian, and with the structures required by Calvin):

There is one person in every congregation who is the *persona* of the Church in that parish. He has a council of elders to assist him, and perhaps a deacons' court; but in modern times neither elders nor deacons claim to be ministers. They are lay officials...

None the less, the minister surrounded by his elders, 'ordained' by the minister as they are commonly said to be, though without imposition of hands, does remind us irresistibly of the primitive bishop with his 'crown' of presbyters.³⁸

Furthermore it is significant that the Presbyterian minister is ordained at the time when he is inducted to his first parochial charge, a practice which is similar to that of the early Church. There 'one could not be ordained "absolutely" as a bishop, presbyter or deacon in the universal Church, but had to be appointed to a specific, vacant ministerial role within an individual Christian community.'³⁹

It might, then, be claimed that as developments inevitably took place in the Church as a result of changing circumstances over the years, the guidance of the Holy Spirit has been *partially* accepted both by episcopal and some non-episcopal Churches: the former maintained their link with early times by retaining the 'historic episcopate' and the structure comprising the three holy orders, albeit in a distorted form; the latter, though deliberately departing from what they correctly perceived to be a distorted kind of episcopacy, succeeded in reproducing

at the parish level something which, though without maintaining the episcopal succession or using the name 'bishop', came in some respects close to the 'Ignatian' pattern. And these reformers, at least in the case of Calvin and those influenced by him, were consciously trying to be loyal to what they understood to be a Scriptural ecclesiology. The writers of *Episcopal Ministry*, however, did not hesitate to say:

We feel able to assert with confidence, then, that through the vicissitudes of the Reformation and the crises of succeeding centuries the Church of England has maintained an episcopate in which the continuities are clear and strong and the preservation of the principles and practice of the early Church has always been important.⁴⁰

Here, as is usual in an Anglican document, a claim of fidelity to the early Church is advanced,⁴¹ but I trust that I have provided enough evidence to show that, by whomsoever made, claims of this kind need to be investigated, and that investigation may show that they do not always merit unqualified acceptance. Accordingly, *mutatis mutandis*, it is proper to include priests and deacons in what T. G. Jalland wrote with regard to bishops in his contribution to *The Apostolic Ministry*:-

It has been said that Anglicans should seek to commend the 'historic episcopate' to those who have set aside the Church order of the Undivided Church. If this be our duty, let us take care that that which we are commending is not only a 'real' episcopate, but is also genuinely 'historic'. ... Our commendation will have better hope of success, if we can show that what we are commending is not a Western or late mediaeval distortion but the pure reflexion of a pre-Nicene tradition traceable to the apostolic age itself.⁴²

As this and the preceding chapter have shown, it cannot be denied that history provides several examples of changes which have not benefited the Church, because they have had the effect of stunting or thwarting the authentic development of its ministerial structure. One consequence of all that has been done is that no Christians now have the right to claim that their communion is unequivocally *the Church* in its completeness. Before Vatican II some ecumenically minded French

Holy Orders and Completeness of the Church

Roman Catholics used to say that denominations other than their own contained to a greater or lesser degree *vestigia Ecclesiae*. Here is a concept which can prove serviceable in the circumstances in which we find ourselves today. On this basis one can argue that whatever any Church may officially maintain, there are good reasons for insisting that, in practice, all Christian communions contain, to a greater or lesser degree *vestigia Ecclesiae*, while none of them at present is *the Church* in its completeness. And one reason for this state of affairs is that all Churches have in one way or another failed to ensure that, when changes in connection with ministries were needed, those which were made had a theological justification and were authentic developments of the 'Ignatian' pattern of holy orders.

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1. 'The Ministry in the Early Church,' in *The Apostolic Ministry*, p. 286 – cf. *Episcopal Ministry*, p. 37f., referring to Augustine, Nicaea and the mediaeval West. An interesting testimony to the innate sense of the corporate New Testament usage is found in L. Morris' comment on 'saints' (ἁγιοί) in *Rm* 1: 7: 'The word is never used ... of any individual believer. It is always a plural when used of believers, and the plural points to believers as a group, a community set apart for God.' (*The Epistle to the Romans*, Grand Rapids/Leicester, 1988, p. 53).
 2. As Ignatius, (*Ephesians*, I, 3) put it, in their bishop Onesimus he met the 'whole multitude' (πολυπλήθεια) of the Ephesian Christians.
 3. R. Scobie, in a letter to *The Tablet*, 24 January 1998, pp. 107f., quoted Canon 351 of the 1983 Code of Canon Law, which 'explicitly states that a candidate for elevation to cardinal must be a priest, and that he must subsequently be consecrated a bishop if he is not one already.' Scobie adds that Pope John Paul II has appointed some theologians as cardinals without requiring them to become bishops. Pope John XXIII had already consecrated to the episcopate cardinals who were members of the curia.
 4. 'On Ecclesial Conciliarity', in *The Legacy of St. Vladimir*, p. 216.
 5. *Op. cit.*, p. 58.
 6. *Episcopal Ministry*, p. 46, where the practice is called 'an anomaly'.
 7. A.C.C.M., *Bishops and Dioceses*, The Report of the Ministry Committee Working Party on the Episcopate, 27, 29, 50, pp. 16, 17, 26.
 8. This and the following paragraph depend largely on *Episcopal Ministry*, p. 183–189, and on P.A. Welsby, *A History of the Church of England 1945–1980*, p. 249–252.
 9. G.R. Evans, *Authority in the Church*, pp. 32f. *Episcopal Ministry* (p. 198f.) attempts to overcome the difficulty by means of the concept of 'the suffragan as episcopal vicar'.
 10. *Episcopal Ministry*, comments: 'Both these variants raise certain questions about the relationship of *episcopo* and pastoral ministry.' (p. 129).
 11. *Op. cit.*, 'Ireland, Christianity in', 1st. ed., p. 700. However, the 3rd. ed. does not reprint these comments, merely saying that 'the Church was not organized in territorial dioceses'. (p. 844)

12. *Episcopal Ministry*, when mentioning the Oriental Orthodox, the modern Coptic Church included, notes 'some interesting parallels with early Celtic monastery-based bishops'. (p. 42, n. 5.)
13. 'The Ministry in the Early Church,' in *The Apostolic Ministry*, p. 199, citing Cyprian. The full Latin is: *illi sunt ecclesia plebs sacerdoti adunata et pastori suo grex adhaerens. unde scire debes episcopum in ecclesia esse et ecclesiam in episcopo*, Ep. lxi, (PL 4, 419. For previous use of part of the quotation from Cyprian, see Chapter III, p. 41).
14. A.M. Ramsey, *The Gospel and the Catholic Church*, p. 64.
15. E. Barnes, Bishop of Richborough, COSTINGS, The Newsletter of Cost of Conscience, Aug. 1996, p. 4; *New Directions*, Dec. 1995, p. 6. (As stated above, some Coptic 'General Bishops' seem in effect to hold 'Personal Prelatures'.)
16. *The Report of the Archbishop of Canterbury's Commission on Communion and Women in the Episcopate*, Eames Commission (1989), 57, quoted in *Episcopal Ministry*, p. 319f.
17. Quoted in *The Tablet*, 1 June 1996, p. 741.
18. *Act of Synod – Act of Folly*, ed. M. Furlong, London, 1998.
19. Samuel L. Edwards, 'A light at nightfall: the dissolution of Christendom as an opportunity for Anglican renewal,' in *The Future of Anglicanism* p. 149f. For the bishop's becoming 'ruler' rather than 'leader', cf. Chapter IV, p. 57.
20. *Episcopal Ministry* mentions, without condemning, 'the demand for "ethnic" bishoprics, with what might be called "cultural" rather than geographically defined areas of jurisdiction', and instances the Diocese of Aotearoa in New Zealand, the Order of Ethiopia in Southern Africa, and the Navajoland Area Mission in the USA (p. 121). The Report, however, in its section on 'Women in the Episcopate', opposes non-territorial 'dioceses', although it recognises that there are precedents in the Anglican Communion. (p. 246, p. 257f., n. 44)
21. Op. cit., p. 121.
22. Op. cit., p. 189f., n. 38.
23. Op. cit., p. 180.
24. B. Cosgrave, 'Structures of Authority', in *Authority in the Church* (ed. S. MacRéamoinn), Blackrock, 1995, p. 39.
25. cf. *Episcopal Ministry*, p. 222f.
26. 'The Ministry in the Early Church', *The Apostolic Ministry*, p. 280.
27. *Freed to Serve – Training and Equipping for Ministry*, p. 11.
28. Op. cit., p. 107.
29. *Trallians* III, 1, quoted Chapter II, p. 23, n. 15.
30. *Like His Brothers and Sisters*, p. 96f.
31. Op. cit., p. 22, quoting *Anglican-Methodist Unity, The Ordinal*, p.12.
32. Cf. also the quotation from A.E. Harvey in Chapter I, p.9.
33. Quoted by permission from the 'Note' written by R. Williams, Bishop of Monmouth and Archbishop of Wales (now Archbishop of Canterbury) – [his underlining].
34. Op. cit., p. 177, n. 9.
35. Letter in *The Tablet*, 26 October 1996, p. 1405. *The Tablet* of 13 July 2002 contained an interesting article about the diaconate and the experiences of 'permanent deacons' in the Roman Catholic Church in England and Wales.
36. In the Orthodox Churches the deacon still survives in theory at the parish level, but nowadays the circumstances obtaining in many countries have rendered it common for the Divine Liturgy to be celebrated by a priest with no diaconal assistance.
37. See Chapter VI, p. 92.

Holy Orders and Completeness of the Church

38. 'Sidelights from Non-Episcopal Communion', in *The Apostolic Ministry*, p. 480f. Cf. *Episcopal Ministry*, p. 143, 'There is a sense in which the bishop of a Roman Catholic, Anglican or Orthodox diocese corresponds to the pastor in a congregational structure.'
39. P.F. Bradshaw, 'Ordination as God's Action through the Church', in D.R. Holeton (ed.) *Anglican Orders and Ordinations*, Joint Liturgical Studies, No. 39, Cambridge, 1997, p. 9f.
40. Op. cit., p. 107.
41. Dix, on the last page of 'The ministry in the early Church', remarked, 'It is thus the fourth-century Church order, not that of the first, second, or third centuries, which has perpetuated itself in Catholic Christendom.' (*The Apostolic Ministry*, p. 287.)
42. 'The Doctrine of the Parity of Ministers', in *The Apostolic Ministry*, p. 346f.

VI SOME INSIGHTS FROM LITURGY

After the preceding historical sketch of developments, it is time to look further at something that has already received preliminary mention. This is the fact that ministers may be regarded as what, in virtue of their ordination, they are in themselves 'iconically', or they may be thought of simply as people who are qualified to perform certain functions or duties. The latter appears to be what the Orthodox theologian Paul Evdokimov was upholding when he wrote: 'The ministry of the priest is *functional*; there is *no ontological* difference between clerics and laypeople.'¹ I think it unnecessary to discuss the ontological implications of looking upon an ordained minister as an 'icon'. Is there any real difficulty about asserting that in thought one can make a distinction between what a man is and what he does, while admitting that his actual functions do have an influence on how he is in himself regarded? Since in any case both the functional and the 'iconic' aspect of holy orders have left their mark on the language of ordination rites, it will be useful to begin by reviewing some of these.

Bishops

The earliest surviving liturgies are found in the *Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus*, which can be dated to about AD 215. Hippolytus does not dispute the right of bishops to pray *ex tempore*,² and in his liturgical compositions perhaps allows here and there his personal views to colour his expressions. However, most of 'his material comes to him rather than from him. It represents the mind and practice ... of the whole Catholic Church of the second century.'³ Thus from a prayer in the *Apostolic Tradition* for an episcopal consecration, we can learn

Holy Orders and Completeness of the Church

how the bishop was then regarded and what his functions were. Part of the prayer is as follows:

Father, who knowest the hearts, grant unto this thy servant, whom thou hast chosen for the episcopate, that he may feed thy holy flock and may blamelessly minister to thee as high priest, serving night and day, and may unceasingly propitiate thy countenance, and offer the gifts of thy holy Church; and that by the high-priestly Spirit he may have power to remit sins according to thy commandment, may assign duties according to thy bidding, and may also loose every bond according to the power which thou gavest to the apostles, and may please thee in gentleness and a pure heart, offering to thee a sweet-smelling savour ...⁴

Here the bishop is viewed as being pastor and high priest; functionally he presides over and leads the community which has elected him, intercedes for its members, provides for their spiritual needs and exercises the power of the keys. As other excerpts from Hippolytus will show, he resembles the 'Ignatian' bishop in having assistants: the presbyters in conjunction with whom he acts as leader of his church; and the deacons, who assist him in the liturgy and in pastoral matters. Great stress is laid on the bishop's personal liturgical role, on his being in a real sense the Christian equivalent of the Jewish high priest and thus, if Zizioulas and Dix are right,⁵ implicitly an 'icon' of Christ. This last aspect is notably absent when Hippolytus is dealing with the ordination of a presbyter.

Not much of Hippolytus' picture can be found surviving in the current Orthodox (Byzantine) rite: according to this, in the second of two prayers, the consecrator prays for the bishop who is being ordained, that

he may bring to thee sacrifice and offering on behalf of all thy people; O Christ, make him also, having been appointed a steward of the grace of high-priesthood, to become an imitator of thee the true shepherd, laying down his own life for thy sheep, to be a guide of the blind, a light of those in darkness,

an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, and a luminary in the world ...⁶

In spite of the reference to high-priesthood and the pastoral motif there is no explicit mention here of the bishop as leader of the church in his diocese, but indirectly the concept of his ruling is implied by a reference in the first prayer to the anointing of kings.⁷

Because of the different history of the Church in the West it is not surprising that the bishop's role as governor features more prominently in mediaeval Latin rites. Thus according to the Sarum Pontifical the consecrator declares a bishop's duties to be 'to judge, to expound, to consecrate, to confirm, to ordain, to offer [the Eucharist], and to baptize';⁸ interestingly at the same time, in a probably unconscious echo of Hippolytus, one of the prayers asks that the bishop may be given 'the ministry of reconciliation', and also '... the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and that he may use, but not glory in, the power which thou givest, for building up and not for destroying ...'⁹ The pastoral motif, however, is not absent, for the actual consecratory prayer includes the words, 'Teach him, O Lord, to feed thy sheep, and grant that as a careful pastor he may be vigilant in the guardianship, entrusted to him, of the flock.'¹⁰

In England the Reformation naturally introduced some changes: however, in the Ordinal of the *Book of Common Prayer* a fair amount of stress still falls on a bishop's role in governing the Church. This is mentioned in the prayer which follows the Litany and in the archbishop's words prefaced to the examination of the new bishop, while the Collect has already asked that all bishops 'may diligently preach thy Word, and duly administer the godly discipline therof'. In the post-Communion Collect there is a similar stress on preaching, while the 'iconic' perception of the bishop as pastor comes to the fore in the charge which accompanies the giving of the Bible,

Be to the flock of Christ a shepherd, not a wolf; feed them, devour them not. Hold up the weak, heal the sick, bind up the broken, bring again the outcasts, seek the lost. Be so merciful, that you be not too remiss; so minister discipline, that you

Holy Orders and Completeness of the Church

forget not mercy: that when the chief Shepherd shall appear
you may receive the never-fading crown of glory ...

This has some resemblance to the Orthodox prayer quoted above, but it is noticeable that the *Prayer Book* has even less to say about the bishop's liturgical role: the nearest approach to a mention comes in the prayer before the laying on of hands, 'giving to thy family their portion in due season', words which can be understood to include the bishop's sacramental ministrations. It is worth remembering that the 1662 Holy Communion service both assumes the normal celebrant to be a priest, and also assigns to the bishop, if present, only the pronouncing of the absolution and the blessing.

In the *Book of Common Prayer* a short instruction describing the duties of deacons is included in the questions put to the candidates, the duties of priests are set out in the long charge which precedes the questions they are asked, but a man about to be consecrated bishop is given no instruction regarding his future duties. The *Alternative Service Book* (1980) provided the same pattern for each of the three rites for ordaining bishops, priests and deacons, and thus before the declarations to be made in reply to questions put to him, the future bishop was told what his duties would be. The questions about belief and manner of life were the same for all three orders, but in the one on the subject of discipline, candidates for the diaconate and the priesthood were asked if they would 'give due respect to those in authority', while a man about to be ordained or consecrated bishop was asked if he would 'faithfully exercise authority within [the Church]'.

According to the A.S.B. the bishop was instructed that he should be 'a chief pastor [who] shares with his fellow bishops a special responsibility to maintain and further the unity of the Church, to uphold its discipline, and to guard its faith. ... He is to know his people and be known by them. He is to ordain and send new ministers, guiding those whom serve with him and enabling them to fulfil their ministry.' In the next paragraph were set out some of a bishop's liturgical functions, including that of presiding at the Eucharist,¹¹ together with his duty 'to minister discipline, but with mercy ... and to those who turn to God he is to declare the forgiveness of sins'. In the actual ordination prayer the same themes recurred, together with a petition to God that through him the Church might be increased and its ministry renewed. 'Enable

him' the prayer also asked, 'as a true shepherd to feed and govern your flock; make him wise as a teacher, and steadfast as guardian of its faith and sacraments.' Although the episcopal functions were more fully described in the alternative rite than in the *B.C.P.*, it seems fair to say that in both the main emphasis is on the bishop as pastor, 'iconically' depicted as a shepherd. The Ordinal of *Common Worship*, the successor to *A.S.B.*, is not yet available for comparison.

There are several noteworthy features in the post-Vatican II order of service used by the Roman Catholic Church and entitled the 'Ordination of a Bishop'. The presentation provides an alternative form of words to be used for one who 'is not to be ordained as a residential bishop', which presumably means a bishop *in partibus*. In his address on the duties of a bishop, the principal consecrator has the option of using his own words, but if he follows the form given, what he says includes, 'In the person of the bishop, with his priests around him, Jesus Christ, the Lord, who became High Priest for ever, is present among you.' Moreover, addressing the bishop-elect, when referring to the Persons of the Trinity, he speaks of 'the Father, whose image you personify in the Church'. Expressions of this kind are strongly reminiscent of the 'iconic' language of Ignatius.

In the last question in the Examination of the Candidate a bishop is described as 'one who has the fulness of the priesthood'. According to a rubric, 'The principal consecrator lays his hands on the head of the bishop-elect, in silence. After him, all the other bishops present do the same.' There follows the Prayer of Consecration, and in singing or saying part of this the principal consecrator is joined by the other bishops. They pray, 'So now pour out upon this chosen one that power which is from you, the governing Spirit whom you gave to your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, the Spirit given by him to the holy apostles ...' In the concluding part, spoken by the principal consecrator alone, there are references to the new bishop as shepherd and as high priest, and in language very close to that of Hippolytus, a petition that he may be granted 'the power to forgive sins as you have commanded, to assign ministries as you have decreed, and to loose every bond by the authority which you gave to your apostles'.

The pastoral motif naturally recurs in the words that accompany the giving of the staff, but it seems less prominent than in the Anglican

rites. Moreover, in spite of the use of the phrase ‘the governing Spirit’, there is distinctly less emphasis on governing than is found in the Sarum Pontifical. Taken as a whole, this modern rite may be described as one which contains, doubtless deliberately, noticeable echoes of Hippolytus, and which portrays the bishop as simultaneously high priest, ruler, and pastor.

Presbyters/Priests

There has been frequent mention in previous chapters of how Ignatius and others after him viewed the presbyters collectively as ‘a representation of the council (*synedrion*) of the apostles’.¹² To illustrate the presence of this ‘iconic’ language in liturgy, words from two prayers for the ordination of a presbyter must now be quoted. Firmly grounded in the Old Testament, Hippolytus’ prayer includes a petition that the ordinand may be granted

the Spirit of grace and counsel of the presbyterate, that he may assist and govern thy people with a pure heart, as thou didst look upon thy chosen people and didst command Moses that he should choose presbyters, whom thou didst fill with thy Spirit whom thou gavest to thy servant [Moses].¹³

In the Leonine Sacramentary there is an early Latin prayer for the ordination of presbyters which has a similar reference to Moses and his being assisted in governing Israel by ‘prudent men’ who were his ‘helpers’.¹⁴ Both Hippolytus and the Latin refer to the seventy elders of *Exodus* 24:1, appointed as assistants to Moses for his work as judge, according to *Exodus* 18:21ff., and to the 70 men from among the elders of Israel who received a share in the spirit given to Moses, according to *Numbers* 11:16f.

Now Ignatius, when calling the presbyterate ‘a representation of the council of the apostles’, uses the word *synedrion* which had long ago been taken over by the Jews and transliterated as *sanhedrin*. Its background in Judaism must now be sketched: the seventy ‘elders of Israel’ (*Exodus* 24:1, again) formed the *Great Sanhedrin*, the body over which before A.D. 70 the high priest presided, and which was recognised by the Romans as having jurisdiction in religious matters over all Jews throughout the Empire. Besides this, in a local Jewish

community there would be a body of 'elders' forming a *sanhedrin*, which was responsible for the care of community property, including the synagogue, and which also sat as a court administering the Law of Moses. Liturgically, however, these 'elders' had no functions other than those of any Jewish layman. References to such *synedria* occur in *Matthew* 10: 17 and *Mark* 13: 9. Christians familiar with the Gospels would remember that according to *Matthew* 19: 28 (cf. *Luke* 22: 30), Christ had promised the apostles that, when he came in glory, they should 'sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel'. So it is not difficult to understand how, for Ignatius, the presbyters came 'iconically' to constitute a *sanhedrin/synedrion*, a corporate body, which was a 'representation' both of Moses' 70 elders and of Christ's 12 apostles, entrusted with the duty of assisting the bishop and together with him acting as leaders and judges of the Christian community.

It is true that in *I Clement* 44, presbyters, whose office is called *ἐπισκοπή* ('oversight'), are said to 'offer the gifts', a reference, as noted in Chapter III, to their liturgical functions at the Eucharist. But at the stage of development reached when *I Clement* was written, there was in Corinth no *one* presiding presbyter styled *the* bishop, and it appears that any one of the presbyters could be selected to officiate as 'celebrant-bishop'. In this way, over a period, each presbyter might fulfil the high-priestly role of 'offering the gifts'. Much the same might also occur in Ignatius' pattern, if the bishop frequently committed the work of presiding at the Eucharist to others than himself.¹⁵ Moreover, even though according to Hippolytus the presbyters joined the bishop in laying their hands 'on the oblation', and after the Eucharistic prayer broke bread which had been held for them on patens by the deacons, they remained silent throughout, for it was the bishop alone who had the duty of uttering the prayer.¹⁶ In fact these cases do not invalidate the assertion that up to, and beyond, the time of Hippolytus, the functions of the presbyter were primarily not liturgical (as opposed to those of the deacon), but had to do with his membership of the *synedrion* which, with the bishop as president, was the body that was in charge of the local Church, and cared pastorally for its members.

However, connected doubtless with the changes outlined in Chapter IV, a definite shift in wording as regards the presbyter's functions can be seen in the Latin ordination prayer mentioned above: this has not only a reference to Moses and his governing the people of Israel, but

also in addition speaks of Eleazar and Ithamar the sons of Aaron, the archetypal high priest:

Likewise also thou didst impart unto Eleazar and Ithamar, the sons of Aaron, the richness of their father's plenty, (*paternae plenitudinis abundantiam*), so that the benefit (*meritum*) of priests (*sacerdotum*) might be sufficient for the salutary sacrifices and the rites of a more frequent worship (*ad hostias salutares et frequentioris officii sacramenta*).¹⁷

This prayer thus pictures the presbyters as having a dual function: either because of the well-known tendency of liturgy to be conservative, or because it reflects what was still the actual situation at the time when it was composed, it envisages both that the presbyters will be assisting the bishop in the exercise of pastoral authority, and also that they will very often act as the bishop's substitutes for the performance of 'high-priestly' ministrations. But it may be that it was the instinct to regard the presbyters as members of a corporate body that led to the mention not just of a single sacerdotal prototype, Eleazar, but also of his younger brother Ithamar, a much less prominent character in the Old Testament. The precedents of Moses' *seventy* elders and of Aaron's *two* priestly sons could suggest the collective nature of the presbyterate under what had now become its two aspects.

As regards the sacerdotal side, reference has already been made to Jerome's dislike of diaconal pretensions, and to his corresponding assertion that only in their power to ordain do bishops differ from presbyters.¹⁸ Furthermore, as might be expected, Jerome elsewhere insisted that bishops should recognise that they are priests, not masters, while he accepted that Aaron and his sons were the Old Testament equivalents of a bishop and his presbyters.¹⁹ Hence when T.G. Jalland wrote concerning the prayer in the Leonine Sacramentary, he observed that it is not surprising that Hippolytus did not find a precedent for presbyters in the 'sons of Aaron', 'for ... the earliest authority for the idea is Jerome'. Later, adducing Greek as well as Latin evidence, he commented:

It should not escape notice that by the conclusion of the fourth century East and West alike had adopted the view that

the Christian presbyter, no less than the bishop, is a *sacerdos* (*hiereus*). The fact that they did so at almost exactly the same point in time makes it natural for some to suppose that here is an example of the working of that guidance which was promised to the Church.²⁰

If in this the Church was divinely guided, that guidance seems to have been received unconsciously. Be this as it may, an observant reader will have remarked that in what has been quoted so far, that is to say material of Eastern and Roman provenance, it is the Old Testament that provides illustrations for the work of the Christian presbyter. In the Gallican rites, on the other hand, it is the New Testament to which reference is made. The transition from Greek to Latin also gives an opportunity for the use of a distinct word, *senior*, a Latin equivalent of presbyter, to describe him in his work of governing. Thus the Gallican prayer at his ordination asks that,

he may show himself to be an elder (*senior*) by the dignity of his acts and the righteousness of his life, taught by these instructions (*his institutus disciplinis*) which Paul presented to Titus and Timothy ... and with the consent (*obsequium*) of thy people may he transform, by an untainted benediction, the body and blood of thy Son ...²¹

Here *senior*, used instead of the transliterated *presbyter*, is an accurate rendering of the Greek word, but it is noticeable that the Vulgate differentiated between what were to be understood as secular and what as ecclesiastical uses of the same word. Thus *I Timothy* 5:1 was taken to refer simply to an older man and *senior* was used, while in verses 17 and 19 of the same chapter and in *Titus* 1: 5, which clearly have to do with office-bearers in the Church, the transliterated form, *presbyter*, was kept. And I think Porter would have done well in his translation not to have used 'elder', but 'presbyter', because in the Vulgate, Jerome, like the writer of the prayer, was ready also to employ *senior* as a description of those performing ecclesiastical functions: in *I Peter* 5:1 *senior* occurs side by side with the rare form *consenior*, instead of the transliterated *sympresbyter*. Possibly *consenior* is used because in verse 5 the Greek original seems to slide over into a simple contrast between younger men and their elders. συμπρεσβύτερος

(*sympresbyter*), a word which does not occur elsewhere in the Greek New Testament, subsequently became common in Christian Greek, while in Latin we sometimes find the hybrid word *compresbyter*.²² There appears then to have been some lack of consistency amongst Latin writers, but the Gallican ordination prayer demonstrates that *senior* could be employed in a sacerdotal context and implicitly with a sacerdotal meaning.

The ordination rites and prayers both in East and West came to lay most emphasis on the sacerdotal or 'high-priestly' function of the presbyter, that is to say his replacing the now frequently absent bishop at many celebrations of the Eucharist. Thus in his article 'Ordinations in the Roman Rite', under the sub-heading 'Romano-Gallican Ordination Rite: 9th to 15th centuries', W.J. O'Shea has observed:

While the ancient Roman ordination prayer emphasized the fact that the newly ordained entered the *presbyterium* and became the co-worker of the bishop, the new additions underscore the doctrine of the sacrificing priesthood and see the priest primarily as celebrant of the Mass.²³

Similarly in the ordinal of Orthodox Churches which liturgically follow the Byzantine pattern, one of the two prayers used by the ordaining bishop speaks of God as 'honouring with the title of presbyter those accounted worthy in this order to minister the word of thy truth';²⁴ the second prayer asks God to

fill [the ordinand] with the gift of thy Holy Spirit, that he may be worthy to serve at thine altar without reproach, to proclaim the gospel of thy kingdom, to minister the word of thy truth, to offer to thee gifts and spiritual sacrifices, to renew thy people through the regeneration of [baptismal] washing ...²⁵

Here too, with more emphasis on liturgical duties than is found in the Orthodox prayers quoted earlier as being used at an episcopal consecration, the new priest is envisaged as an individual undertaking the functions which before the fourth century had been regarded as normally the prerogative of the bishop; he is not depicted as joining

a college corporately responsible for the oversight of the people of God. Moreover, whereas the West has retained at least a trace of the collegiate 'icon' of presbyterate in that all the priests present join the bishop in the imposition of hands, it is the Orthodox bishop alone who lays his hand upon the man being ordained. Noteworthy, though, is the fact that the ordinand is led to the bishop by two clerics who hold him by the arms, a vestigial remnant of the practice which originated in times when a very reluctant man, perhaps a monk,²⁶ might well be thought suitable and chosen for priesthood. A great difference from the Greek ordination prayers can be found amongst the non-Chalcedonian Ethiopians (Abyssinians): apparently at least as late as 1691 they confined themselves to a prayer very like that of Hippolytus, referring to Moses and the elders, but with no mention at all of the priest's liturgical functions.²⁷

In contrast to this survival, the mediaeval Sarum Latin rite assumed that priests would be individuals deputising for their bishop in liturgical matters, above all in offering the Eucharistic sacrifice. Thus the prayer to be said by the ordaining bishop included the petitions that

they may show themselves to be elders (*seniores*) by the dignity of their acts and by the righteousness of their lives, taught by these instructions which Paul presented to Titus and Timothy ... and with the consent of thy people may they transform, by a holy and untainted benediction, the bread and wine into the body and blood of thy Son ...²⁸

This is in one respect an example of liturgical conservatism, because albeit now in the plural, much of the language of the Gallican prayer has survived, including the word *senior* and the reference to Titus and Timothy.

Indeed the post-Vatican II rite still has a prayer with some of these echoes, which are now accompanied again by what might be termed an archeological mention of Moses and his elders. The American/English version is:

In the desert you extended the spirit of Moses to seventy wise men who helped him to rule the great company of his people. You shared among the sons of Aaron the fullness of

Holy Orders and Completeness of the Church

their father's power, to provide worthy priests in sufficient number for the increasing rites of sacrifice and worship. With the same loving care you gave companions to your Son's apostles to help in teaching the faith: they preached the Gospel to the whole world. Lord, grant also to us such fellow workers, for we are weak and our need is greater.

At an earlier stage in this rite, the bishop, when introducing the ordinand, says 'We choose this man, our brother, for priesthood in the presbyteral order', and after the homily, he 'addresses the people and the candidate on the duties of a priest'. The words which he 'may use' to the people include:

Priests are co-workers of the order of bishops. They are joined to the bishops in the priestly office and are called to serve God's people.

Our brother has seriously considered this step and is now to be ordained to priesthood in the presbyteral order...

He is called to share in the priesthood of the bishops and to be molded into the likeness of Christ, the supreme and eternal Priest. By consecration he will be made a true priest of the New Testament, to preach the Gospel, sustain God's people, and celebrate the liturgy, above all, the Lord's sacrifice.

Here can be seen examples of the tendency mentioned in Chapter I not to make a clear distinction between presbyterate and episcopate.²⁹ The implication appears to be that there is some difference between 'priesthood' and 'presbyterate': priesthood, it appears to be suggested, pertains essentially to the episcopate, though to some extent it is imparted to priests, who are 'fellow workers' with their bishops. It is true that much of the language of the rite is redolent of early liturgies, but there is little to suggest that the ordinand is seen as entering a corporate body, the college of presbyters, still less that this college is an 'icon' of 'the council of the apostles'. The most that can be said is that a rubric does order that after the bishop has laid hands (in silence) on the candidate, the priests present are to do the same.

The Reformation in England provided a stimulus for redefining the work of ordained ministers. In the Ordinal of the *Book of Common Prayer*, as regards priests (presbyters), there appears a clear break with the past, both in theory and practice. There is no mention of the priest's becoming a member of the council which assists the bishop in governing God's people, nor is there any explicit statement concerning his role at the Eucharist. Instead, in a magnificent charge, the ordinands are told that they as individuals 'are called to be Messengers, Watchmen, and Stewards of the Lord; to teach, and to premonish, to feed and provide for the Lord's family; to seek for Christ's sheep that are dispersed abroad, and for his children who are in the midst of this naughty world, that they may be saved through Christ for ever.' The actual formula of ordination in 1550, 'Receive the Holy Ghost: whose sins thou dost forgive, they are forgiven; and whose sins thou dost retain, they are retained,'³⁰ was taken direct from the Sarum rite. And whereas in that rite the newly ordained had each been given a paten and chalice with the words, 'Receive power to offer sacrifice to God and to celebrate mass both for the living and the dead', from the 1552 revision onwards each has been given a Bible, accompanied by the words, 'Take thou Authority to preach the Word of God, and to minister the holy Sacraments in the Congregation, where thou shalt be lawfully appointed thereunto.'

The emphasis on the pastoral nature of the presbyterate in sixteenth century Anglicanism may be reflected in the Litany in which the three orders were designated 'bishops, pastors and ministers' until 1662,³¹ when the wording was changed to 'bishops, priests and deacons'. On the other hand, it is interesting to note that in the Latin version of the XXXIX Articles the title of Article XXII is *De Conjugio Sacerdotum*. All this constitutes both an acceptance of, and a reaction against, what had come to be perceived as the functions of the one styled at different places in the course of the Sarum rite as *sacerdos*, *presbyter* and *senior*. What has been lost is the pre-Constantinian understanding of the presbyterate as denoting membership of a corporate body rather than a role belonging to an ordained individual. The only remaining visible trace of that earlier understanding is that while the bishop says the formula of ordination, the priests present join with him in laying hands on the candidate.

Holy Orders and Completeness of the Church

In the *A.S.B.*, there remains some of what is found in the *B.C.P.* charge to the ordinands, while a priest's liturgical and pastoral duties are spelled out more fully. In the opening words one may see a tentative step towards the recovery of the concept of the presbyterate as basically corporate rather than individual: 'A priest is called by God to work with the bishop and with his fellow-priests, as servant and shepherd among the people to whom he is sent.' A desire for changes in the ordination rites had for some time been making itself felt, and influenced by the work of liturgical scholars such as E.C. Ratcliff, a committee of the 1958 Lambeth Conference had suggested that there might be 'some revision of our ordinals', and specifically that 'there could be, in the prayer for those to be ordained, mention of the specific ministry to be given to them'.³² Accordingly, in the *A.S.B.* the 1662 imperative formula, 'Receive the Holy Chost ...', is replaced by a prayer, 'Send down the Holy spirit upon your servant N for the office and work of a priest in your Church.' While the bishop says this for each ordinand, he is joined by the priests present in the laying-on of hands. There follow petitions for all being ordained, in which the emphasis in the *B.C.P.* formula on pronouncing absolution is set in the context of references to the pastoral and liturgical duties of the new priest or priests, and God is asked to 'give them wisdom and discipline to work faithfully with all their fellow-servants in Christ'. In spite of the changes, it has to be said that the basic idea of presbyteral ministry conveyed by the *A.S.B.* remains predominantly something individually discharged.

It should be noted that already in 1958 something similar to the *A.S.B.* rite had appeared in an Ordinal, composed in English and issued by the Church of South India. This Church had been formed in 1947 by the agreement of Anglicans, Methodists and Presbyterians/Congregationalists to unite. Whereas, however, in the *A.S.B.* the actual prayer by the bishop for each candidate is simply, 'Send down the Holy Spirit upon your servant N for the office and work of a priest in your Church', the C.S.I. Ordinal is more detailed at this point. The prayer is: 'Send down thy Holy Spirit upon thy servant ..., whom we, in thy name, and in obedience to thy most blessed will, do now ordain presbyter in thy Church, committing unto him authority to minister thy word and sacraments, to declare thy forgiveness to penitent sinners, and to shepherd thy flock.'³³ It may be significant that the ordinand is termed 'a presbyter', which reintroduces the language of the early

Church and is a word that was not in common use among any of the uniting bodies at the time when they came together. Moreover, it would seem that the composers of the Ordinal were much concerned to specify the authority belonging to presbyters, but did not feel this need in the case of deacons or bishops: the ordination prayers for both of these have nothing corresponding to the clause 'committing unto him ...', but otherwise, except for the word 'bishop' or 'deacon', all three prayers are the same. The impression given is that although the C.S.I. revived the term 'presbyter', it continued to envisage him as an individual who would for most day-to-day purposes embody in himself all the ministries of the Church. This would be strengthened perhaps by the fact that although the C.S.I. adopted the Anglican pattern of three holy orders, it did not insist that the minister of Confirmation must be a bishop.

Methodist Worship (1999), it is worth noticing, entitles one of its services 'The Ordination of Presbyters, commonly called Ministers'. This has an ordination prayer constructed on the same pattern as that in the C.S.I. The words said for each individual candidate at the laying-on of hands are: 'Father, send the Holy Spirit upon N for the office and work of a Presbyter in your Church.' In the concluding part of the prayer, which like the opening portion is said for all who are being ordained, they are described as 'pastors and teachers' and God is entreated that 'they may boldly proclaim your truth and faithfully celebrate your sacraments.' After the Lord's Prayer and the giving of a Bible to the newly ordained, the President says: 'In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ I declare that you have been ordained as Presbyters of the one holy catholic and apostolic Church of Christ.' This declaration is somewhat similar to one which is found in the corresponding position in the C.S.I. ordinal.

When the ordinal for the new Church of England *Common Worship* is produced, it is to be hoped that it will contain some more definite acknowledgment of the collegiate or corporate aspect of presbyteral ministry, bringing back the Ignatian 'icon' of 'the council of the apostles'. Such hopes, unfortunately, are unlikely to be realised if those responsible for it are influenced by a sentence in the influential World Council of Churches 'Lima Report'. According to this, 'Presbyters serve as pastoral ministers of word and sacraments in a

local eucharistic community.³⁴ Here one again finds the mistaken notion that the presbyter, not the bishop, is the normal president of the eucharist in the local church, and although presbyters are spoken of in the plural they are not apparently envisaged acting with the bishop as a body in his and their joint ministry in the local church.

The language of ordination rites, then, has been modified in response to the influence of various changes in the functions which have, at different times, come to be considered as specially characteristic of the presbyter's ministry. These functions have included: being a member of a Christian *sanhedrin*, offering liturgically the Christian community's sacrifice, teaching the community, shepherding it, absolving it, and leading its worship. As individuals, members of the presbyterate have come to undertake, not exceptionally but as a matter of course, functions which have made it almost impossible for them to be viewed collectively as a 'representation' of the 'council of the apostles'. It is sad that this ministry, at first essentially corporate, has through pragmatic changes been so thoroughly transformed - or deformed - that in modern liturgical language there remain only faint reflections of its origins in the 'Ignatian' pattern, and of its ancestry in Judaism.

Deacons

It is reasonable to follow Afanassieff³⁵ to the extent of assuming that Ignatius had in mind liturgical functions performed by deacons at the Eucharist. This is implied by his describing them as 'deacons of the mysteries of Jesus Christ ... for they are not deacons of foods and drinks'.³⁶ Hippolytus gives definite information in a rubrical statement and in the accompanying ordination prayer. For him, the deacon is clearly differentiated from the presbyter and is the bishop's assistant, notably in the liturgy, and thus he states:

[The deacon] does not receive the spirit shared by the presbyterate of which the presbyters partake, but that which is confided to him under the bishop's power. For this reason, let the bishop alone make him a deacon...

Hippolytus' prayer for the deacon's ordination includes the petition:

...give the Spirit of grace and of diligence to this thy servant whom thou hast chosen to minister to thy Church and to present in thy sanctuary what is offered to thee by him who is established as thy high priest for the glory of thy name ...³⁷

This language suggests that a deacon, especially when taking his part in the liturgy of the Eucharist, can be regarded as an 'icon' of the servanthood of Christ, in conformity with the view expressed by Afanassieff.³⁸

The old Roman rites contain very similar expressions, but in a collect in the Leonine Sacramentary the candidates are also said to be called 'to the office of Levites' (*officium levitarum*).³⁹ Here again, this Old Testament reference seems to be characteristic of the Latin West. But furthermore the long consecratory prayer, which also mentions 'the sons of Levi', ends with a petition which at first sight might be taken to envisage the likelihood of the 'promotion' of deacons to the priesthood:

... may they continue strong and stable in Christ, and by fitting advancements from a lower grade may they be worthy, through thy grace, to take up higher things ... (*dignisque successibus de inferiori gradu per gratiam tuam capere potiora mereantur*)⁴⁰

The language of this prayer somewhat resembles, although it does not exactly repeat, *I Timothy* 3:13, a text which, whatever its original meaning, did come to be interpreted as referring to deacons and their being found worthy of ordination as priests. Yet this thought seems not to have been in the mind of whoever originally composed the Roman prayer, for, as we noticed in connection with St Jerome, and as Porter emphatically states,

the diaconate had greater prestige at Rome than the presbyterate. ... The final clause in the deacon's prayer, therefore, can hardly refer to advancement to the priesthood (as is often supposed nowadays), but either to the weighty responsibilities of the 'cardinal deacons' themselves, or to the possibility of advancement to the episcopate. It was from

the college of Roman deacons that the bishop of that city was normally chosen, and consecrated to the episcopate without passage through the presbyterate.⁴¹

The assumption that he might expect to be 'promoted' was present in one version of Hippolytus' prayer for the deacon's ordination, part of which was quoted above. An English rendering of Botte's French translation would be '... that ministering without reproach and in a pure life, he may obtain a higher degree ...'⁴² Here too, because he could not use the Verona ms., Botte for his translation relied on a Latin rendering of the Ethiopic. However, Dix⁴³ did not include this last petition. The version of *Testamentum Domini* (ed. I. Rahmani, Mainz, 1899), which Botte also printed,⁴⁴ runs, 'that serving without reproach and purely and cleanly and in a pure mind he may be worthy of this high and exalted degree.' In the light of the high view of the diaconate that prevailed in the early Church, it is virtually certain that either total omission, or the *Testamentum Domini* version, is more faithful than the Ethiopic to Hippolytus' original Greek.

According to the mediaeval Sarum rite, after the Epistle and the Litany, the ordinands were instructed by the bishop, 'It is the duty of a deacon to minister at the altar, to read the gospel, baptize and preach.'⁴⁵ The bishop alone then laid his hand upon each of them, saying *secrete*, 'Receive the Holy Spirit.' The rubric following explained this in language reminiscent of Hippolytus, 'because they are consecrated not to priesthood but to ministry'.⁴⁶ In addition, this rite included, in the long consecratory prayer said by the ordaining bishop, a reference to 'the sons of Levi having been chosen from the beginning'.⁴⁷ In the blessing pronounced before the bestowal of the dalmatic, there was a mention of St Stephen,⁴⁸ one of the Seven chosen to assist the apostles, according to *Acts* 6.

The current Orthodox Byzantine rite, while referring to St Stephen as a deacon, makes considerable use of *I Timothy* 3: the bishop prays that the ordinand may 'hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience'; later in the same prayer he states that 'those who serve well as deacons gain a good standing for themselves.'⁴⁹

In the *Book of Common Prayer*, the sons of Levi are not mentioned, but the Collect names as prototypes of those to be ordained deacons

‘the first martyr Saint Stephen, with others’. The language of another of the prayers was criticised in the last chapter, because it styles the diaconate ‘this inferior Office’ and asks that the newly ordained ‘may be found worthy to be called unto higher Ministries ...’. Similarly, the final rubric takes it for granted that unless he misbehaves the deacon will after about a year be ‘promoted’ and ordained priest. The duties of a deacon are described as assisting the priest, especially at Holy Communion, reading Scripture in church, teaching the young, baptizing when the priest is not available, preaching if permitted to do so by the bishop, and ‘where provision is so made’ ministering to the sick and poor. The *B.C.P.* retains the old position in the rite of the actual ordination, that is to say after the Epistle, and having laid his hands on each candidate, the bishop gives him a New Testament, saying,

Take thou authority to read the Gospel in the Church of God, and to preach the same, if thou be thereto licensed by the Bishop himself.

The next rubric prescribes that one of the newly ordained shall read the Gospel, and thus perform his first liturgical act as a deacon.

In the *A.S.B.* the Collect does not refer to St Stephen; the description of a deacon’s duties is not greatly altered; and the ordination itself is deferred until after the Gospel, the Sermon, and the Creed (if used). At the laying on of hands, in place of unsatisfactory *B.C.P.* ordination formula, ‘Take thou authority...’, the bishop prays for each candidate, ‘Send down your Holy Spirit upon your servant N for the office and work of a deacon in your Church.’ This is followed by a petition that all the newly ordained may have ‘grace and power to fulfil their ministry’. Although the newly ordained deacon is given a New Testament – unlike the priest and the bishop who receive a complete Bible – , the traditional reference to the deacon’s special responsibility for reading the Gospel is no longer mentioned. Instead, the words accompanying the presentation are:

Receive this Book, as a sign of the authority given you this day to speak God’s word to his people. Build them up in his truth and serve them in his name.

Holy Orders and Completeness of the Church

Here there is perhaps a faint echo of the description of deacons as 'having been entrusted with the diaconate of Jesus Christ', a description which, it will be recalled, had for Ignatius a notable 'iconic' significance.⁵⁰ The *A.S.B.* post-Communion prayer is quite different from that in the *B.C.P.* and does not ask that a deacon 'may be found worthy to be called unto the higher Ministries in thy Church'.

As in the Anglican *A.S.B.*, in the Roman Catholic rite now in use the ordination of deacons takes place no longer between the Epistle and the Gospel, but after the Liturgy of the Word. According to a rubric, in the Homily, the bishop, speaking to the people 'about the office of deacon may use these words'. What is then suggested includes a description of what those about to be ordained will do, 'They will help the bishop and his body of priests as ministers of the word, of the altar, and of charity. They will make themselves servants to all.' The concluding words suggested for the bishop's address to the people are, 'From the way that they go about these duties, may you recognize them as disciples of Jesus, who came to serve, not to be served.' Here the 'icon' of servanthood makes a definite reappearance, after having either not been included at all, or not been prominent in the Greek, Sarum and Anglican rites reviewed above.

The actual ordination is performed by the bishop laying hands in silence upon each candidate. Then, with his hands extended over all of them, he sings, or says, 'the prayer of consecration'. This, in the address to God, includes the words,

You established a threefold ministry of worship and service for the glory of your name. As ministers of your tabernacle you chose the sons of Levi ... In the first days of your Church under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit the apostles of your Son appointed seven men of good repute to assist them in the daily ministry, so that they themselves might be more free for prayer and preaching. By prayer and the laying on of hands the apostles entrusted to those chosen men the ministry of serving at tables.

Interestingly, the Levites are here brought in again, and at the same time the explicit references to *Acts* 6 imply that the Seven, whose 'ordination' is there described, can be called 'deacons'.⁵¹ There is,

however, no mention of the martyr St Stephen, the most prominent of the Seven. After the newly ordained have been vested with stole and dalmatic, the bishop 'places the Book of the Gospels in the hands of each one and says: Receive the Gospel of Christ, whose herald you now are ... ' Here again, as in the *A.S.B.*, the liturgical reading of the Gospel is not specified. Noteworthy also is the fact that the service provides for a 'Commitment to Celibacy' which is made by those who hope later to become priests, but not by those whom a rubric describes as 'not obliged to make the commitment to celibacy'. Apart from this, the rite is the same for both classes of ordinands.

In connection with this commitment, it is very interesting that in an article in *The Tablet* in May 2004 mention was made of 'a sudden, and dramatic, increase in vocations to the permanent diaconate – mostly from married men ... in their fifties and sixties. They are the new generation of priests-in-waiting if the next pope opts to ordain married men to the priesthood.' This confirms what was said in Chapter I, but it is significant that the director of the new (Roman Catholic) National Office for Vocation, who was being interviewed, added: 'It is vital that we're not just plugging a clerical hole, that there's an authentic sense of what the ministry of the deacon is, and that shouldn't eclipse the ministry of the laity.'⁵²

Ordained Ministers as 'icons' and functionaries

Before this lengthy chapter is brought to a conclusion, I must discuss more fully what was broached in the opening paragraph. A variety of examples have illustrated the way that liturgical language often sheds light on the Church's expectations concerning its ordained ministers. We have seen that there are times when changes in the language of ordination rites reflect actual changes in the functions performed by the ordained, while at other times liturgical conservatism may retain wording more appropriate to a former age. It is important to notice that insofar as there has been theological appraisal of the language of the rites, this has been concerned with what ministers do, their functions. Thus questions were raised in England in the sixteenth century about the Real Presence and the nature of the Eucharistic Sacrifice, and the influence of the resulting decisions can be seen in the Prayer Book Ordinal, in which the functions of the priesthood were markedly redefined. But the discussions that gave rise to those decisions, and the

decisions themselves, had scarcely any effect on the 'iconic' language of the ordination rites.

The examples taken from these rites have enabled us to look at the functions of bishops, presbyters, and deacons as distinct from, yet closely connected with, what in themselves they are. Their functions have changed, sometimes greatly, because the Church has found itself facing new conditions. And these changes to some extent have been reflected both in the language of ordinals and also in the 'iconic' perception which people have come to have of those in holy orders. But in spite of everything, Anglicans, Orthodox and Roman Catholics have retained these three orders of ministers. It seems that instinctively they are regarded as somehow basic and ecclesiologicaly essential for the completeness of the Church, although there have been few signs of willingness to take theological account of the implications of changes that have taken place in their functions.

By way of contrast, let us take note of other ministries which, however important at certain times they may be, are purely functional and so used or discontinued as circumstances alter. One such minister, whose *raison d'être* is purely functional, has appeared and disappeared according as the need for him was or was not felt. Thus in periods and places in which many were illiterate, the reader (lector) had an important function within the Church: as we noted above, the bishop might pray *ex tempore* if he was unable to read, but a literate person was indispensable for the readings from Holy Scripture, which have always formed part of Christian worship. As literacy became an invariable requirement for bishops, presbyters, and deacons, the need for readers declined, and their liturgical functions more or less vanished – the office of lector, nevertheless, nominally remained as a 'minor order' in the Roman Catholic and Orthodox Churches. But in the nineteenth century in the Church of England the office of reader was revived, those admitted to it being authorised not only to read the lessons from the Bible but also to conduct the entire services of Matins and Evensong, apart from pronouncing the absolution and the blessing. They were also given permission to preach at these services, and more recently at the Eucharist as well. They are now authorised to undertake other liturgical functions, including officiating at funerals. The fact remains, however, that in spite of their great contribution to the work of the Church, Anglican readers, though formally admitted to office, are

not ordained, and this is illustrated by their commonly but incorrectly being called 'lay readers', an appellation which most of them dislike.

Thus, to return to the question touched on at the beginning of this chapter, one can hold on to the distinction between 'the functional' and what I would call 'the ontological', while at the same time acknowledging that it is artificial to seek to view bishops, presbyters and deacons as 'icons' while disregarding the functions which they are actually seen and known to perform. Ignatius found it appropriate to write of the bishop as a 'representation' of God the Father,⁵³ because he himself and the other bishops of his acquaintance presided in a fatherly manner over their Churches, particularly at the Eucharist. Yet, conversely, once it has been accepted that the structure of a local Church includes one who, because he presides in this way, is in himself a man of 'iconic' significance, his functions can be recognised as manifestations of what through his ordination he is. But unlike the bishop, readers, important though their function may be in certain circumstances, have never been regarded as having 'iconic' or 'ontological' significance, and so it cannot be maintained that they have an essential place in the structure of the Church.

As regards those in holy orders it is necessary here to pay attention once again to Zizioulas, who would 'place the entire matter of ordination outside the dilemma of choosing between *ontological* and *functional*'.⁵⁴ He maintains, so Paul McPartlan interprets him, that

to have an (ontological) ecclesial identity is to have a (functional) relationship and role, *here and now*, in this concrete event [the Eucharist], in the *actual personal presence* of the members of the local church, in which every initiated Christian occupies a specific *ordo*. This is ... how he understands the 'functional' as having 'ontological' weight.⁵⁵

Furthermore, McPartlan, shortly after this reference to 'every initiated Christian', in other words all the members of the laity, goes on to say that Zizioulas insists that 'the one and the many are *mutually constitutive*'.⁵⁶ By implication he thus shows that it is right to insist both that ordination is important and that 'clericalism' is a theological error.

Holy Orders and Completeness of the Church

At this point, as I come to the end of this attempt to take note of liturgical evidence concerning the 'iconic' significance of ministers and also their functions, what must be stressed is the ecclesiological importance of the interdependence of 'the one' that is to say the bishop, and 'the many', made up of the college of presbyters, the deacons, unordained ministers (for example, readers), and all initiated Christians. Together 'the one' and 'the many' constitute the completeness of every local church, and insofar as a church is in this respect deficient, it is not wholly complete, and presumably in consequence the Eucharist which it celebrates has to be regarded as coming short to some extent of the glory of God.

I must add that it is wrong to concentrate attention on 'the one', the bishop, in such a way as to designate collectively all the other members of the community as 'the many', and so fail in practice to recognise the real distinctions to be found amongst them. To act in this way would be tantamount to ignoring what has been insisted upon in this and previous chapters regarding the 'iconic' significance of priests and deacons. Something of the kind has been one result of the process which has done a great deal to set the bishop apart from the college of presbyters of which he is the president. It has meant that it is now not possible for most Christians regularly or frequently to see bishop and presbyters actually sitting, standing or acting together, and thus constituting an 'icon' of Christ surrounded by his apostles. Besides this, if the deacons, the bishop's assistants and 'fellow-servants',⁵⁷ are simply treated as those members of the clerical division of 'the many' who for the time being happen to be apprentice-priests, then it becomes hard for others to view them as people 'entrusted with the diaconate of Jesus Christ',⁵⁸ or to 'respect [them] as Jesus Christ' himself.⁵⁹

Let me end by reaffirming my conviction that it is important to be ready to look at those in holy orders and all other Christians in more than one way, and, without slighting ecclesiology, to enter a realm which has more in common with art or poetry than with legal exactness or logic. If the Church and its ministers are to be regarded 'iconically', we must always be prepared, as we view them, to find ourselves looking at more than one 'icon'. We have seen, for instance, in this chapter that there were two 'icons' of the presbyterate in those ordination prayers in which presbyters were envisaged both in terms of Moses and the 70, and also of Aaron's sons, Eleazar and Ithamar. It

would be misleading to allow oneself to be so obsessed with a desire for neat classification and arrangement as to try always to confine each ministry within one single 'icon'. Neither liturgy nor ecclesiology can consent to be restricted in that way.

1. P. Evdokimov, *The Sacrament of Love*, (tr. A.P. Gythiel and V. Steadman), Crestwood, 1995 (first printing 1985), p. 86. It is significant that Zizioulas refers to 'the fact that it is quite inadequate to speak of the ministry as a choice between "ontological" or "functional", and ... to the need of working out some new way of expressing the effect of ordination upon the ordained'. (*Being as Communion*, p. 227, n. 47). Cf. also McPartlan's interpretation of Zizioulas on p. 108, near the end of this chapter.
2. *La Tradition Apostolique de Saint Hippolyte*, B. Botte, Münster, 1963, 9, p. 28f., *Episcopus autem gratias agit (εὐχαριστεῖν) secundum quod praediximus. Nullo modo (οὐ παντὶ) necessarium est (ἀναγκή) ut proferat eadem verba quae praediximus ... Tantum (μόνον) ore quod sanum est in orthodoxia (ὀρθόδοξος)*. Botte's work is a reconstitution of the text, relying greatly on the Verona ms. This, although it has some mistakes, he shows to be on the whole a very literal rendering of the original Greek. Botte gives a translation into French, and I have produced my own English one.
3. G. Dix, *The Apostolic Tradition of St. Hippolytus*, revised edition published by H. Chadwick, with corrections, preface and bibliography, London, 1968 (1st ed. 1937), p. xlv.
4. Botte, op. cit., 3, p. 8ff. - *Da, cordis cognitor pater, super hunc seruum tuum, quem elegisti ad episcopatu<m>, pascere gregem sanctam tuam, et primum sacerdotii tibi exhibere sine repraehensione, seruientem noctu et die, incessanter repropitiari uultum tuum et offerre dona sancta<e> ecclesiae tuae, sp<irit>u[m] primatus sacerdotii habere potestatem dimittere peccata secundum mandatum tuum, dare sortes secundum praeceptu<m> tuum, soluere etiam omnem collegationem secundum potestatem quam dedisti apostolis, placere autem tibi in mansuetudine et mundo corde, offerentem tibi odorem suauitatis ...* ('high priest, high priesthood' are renderings of the Greek ἀρχιερατεύειν, ἀρχιερατικός, found in the Epitome of the Apostolic Constitutions, which Botte uses in reconstituting the text; the Latin (Verona ms.) rendering is 'primatus sacerdotii')
5. See Chapters II and III, pp. 26, 35.
6. εἰς τὸ ἀναφέρειν σοι θυσίαν καὶ προσφορὰν ὑπὲρ παντὸς τοῦ λαοῦ σου· σὺ, Χριστέ, καὶ τοῦτον τὸν ἀναδειχθέντα οἰκονόμον τῆς ἀρχιερατικῆς χάριτος, ποιήσον γενέσθαι μιμητὴν σοῦ τοῦ ἀληθινοῦ Ποιμένου, τιθέντα τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ ὑπὲρ τῶν προβάτων σου, ὁδηγὸν εἶναι τυφλῶν, φῶς τῶν ἐν σκότει, παιδευτὴν ἀφρόνων, διδάσκαλον νηπίων, φωστῆρα ἐν κόσμῳ ... ΕΤΧΟΛΟΓΙΟΝ ΤΟ ΜΕΓΑ, p. 168.
7. ὡς ἔχρισας τοὺς βασιλεῖς, op. cit., p. 167.
8. *Episcopum oportet judicare, interpretari, consecrare, confirmare, ordinare, offerre, et baptizare* – W. Maskell, *Monumenta Ritualia Ecclesiae Anglicanae*, II, 270.
9. *ministerium reconciliationis; ... claves regni coelorum, ut utatur, non gloriatur, potestate quam tribuis in aedificationem, non in destructionem* – op. cit., II, 279.
10. *Praeceptum Domini, huic pascere oves tuas, ac tribue ut in commissis gregis custodia sollicitus pastor vigilet* – op. cit., II, 282.
11. In contrast to the B.C.P., a rubric in the A.S.B. stipulates that, when present, it is appropriate that the bishop should preside at a Eucharist.

Holy Orders and Completeness of the Church

12. *Magnesians*, VI, 1.
13. Botte, op. cit., 7, p. 20 – *sp<iritu>m gratiae et consilii praesbyteris ut adiubet et gubernet plebem tuam in corde mundo, sicut respexisti super populum electionis tuae et praecepisti Moysi ut elegeret praesbytereos quos replesti de sp<irit>u tuo quod tu donasti famulo tuo.*
14. ... *in heremo per septuaginta virorum prudentium mentes Moyse spiritum propagasti, quibus ille adiutoribus usus in populo, innumeras multitudines facile gubernavit.* (H.B. Porter, *The Ordination Prayers of the Ancient Western Churches*, pp. 26f.)
15. *Smyrnaeans* VIII, 1.
16. Botte, op. cit., 4, p. 12f. In n. 2 on p. 13 Botte shows that Hippolytus does not mean that the presbyters, while laying hands on the oblations, also join in the recitation of the prayer, because the reading of one ms. which might seem to suggest this is demonstrably a mere scribal blunder.
17. H.B. Porter, op. cit., p. 26f. Here and elsewhere I quote Porter's translation, adding in brackets the Latin of significant words. In the apparatus Porter gives details of differences of wording among the authorities he uses: the Leonine Sacramentary here reads *frequentiores* instead of *frequentioris*, and the Gelasian (Angoulême) and Gregorian Sacramentaries have 'ministry' (*ministerium*) instead of 'benefit' (*meritum*). For the account of Eleazar's succeeding Aaron as high-priest, see *Nb* 20:23–28.
18. Chapter IV, p. 52.
19. *Sed et episcopi sacerdotes se sciant esse, non dominos; ... Aaron et filios eius, hoc episcopum et presbyteros noverimus,* *Ep.* LII, C.S.E.L. LIV, (ed. I. Hilberg), Vienna, 1910, p. 427.
20. 'The Doctrine of the Parity of Ministers', in *The Apostolic Ministry*, p. 337, 340. cf. the quotations from Dix in Chapter III, p. 35 n. 10, and p. 36 n. 15.
21. H.B. Porter, op. cit., p. 50f.
22. E.g. Caldonius writing to Cyprian, *PL* 4 278B; Augustine, *De curis pro mortuis gerundis*, *PL* 40, 610. It is worth remarking that *consacerdotes* was used by Leo the Great with reference to his fellow-bishops in Sermon III, SC 200, Léon le Grand, *Sermons* (ed. R. Dolle), Paris, 1973, p. 260.
23. *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. X.
24. ὁ τῇ ποσηγορίᾳ τοῦ πρεσβυτέρου τιμήσας τοὺς ἐν τῷ βαθμῷ τούτῳ ἀξιωθέντας ἱερουργεῖν τὸν λόγον τῆς σῆς ἀληθείας, ΕΥΧΟΛΟΓΙΟΝ ΤΟ ΜΕΓΑ, p. 164 - cf. *Rm* 15:16, *2 Tm* 2:15.
25. πλήρωσον τῆς τοῦ Ἀγίου σου Πνεύματος δωρεάς· ἵνα γένηται ἄξιος παρεστάναι τῷ θυσιαστηρίῳ σου, κηρύσσειν τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς βασιλείας σου, ἱερουργεῖν τὸν λόγον τῆς ἀληθείας σου, προσφέρειν σοι δῶρα καὶ θυσίας πνευματικὰς, ἀνακαινίζειν τὸν λαόν σου διὰ τοῦ λουτροῦ παλιγγενεσίας, *ibid.*, p. 165 – cf. *Deut* 10: 8, 18: 5 (LXX παρεστάναι), *Mt* 3: 1, 9: 35, 24: 14, *Rm* 15: 16, *2 Tm* 2: 15, *Heb* 5: 1, 8: 3, *1 P* 2: 5, *Tt* 3. 5.
26. Cf. Chapter IV, p. 52.
27. An English translation of the text is given in *Saepius Officio* (the response of the archbishops of Canterbury and York to Leo XIII's encyclical, *Apostolicae Curae*), reprinted London, 1977, p. 43, n. App.4.
28. *ut gravitate actuum et censura vivendi probent se esse seniores, his instituti disciplinis, quas Tito et Timotheo Paulus exposuit ... et per obsequium plebis tuae, panem et vinum in corpus et sanguinem Filii tui sancta et immaculata benedictione transformant ...* – Maskell, op. cit., p. 222. To bring out the similarity I have conformed my translation to that which Porter gives of the Gallican prayer, which he cites, and from which I have already quoted.
29. Cf. p. 9.

30. In 1662 there was added here, 'for the Office and Work of a Priest in the Church of God, now committed unto thee by the Imposition of our hands'.
31. The collect for St Peter's Day, composed in 1549, has the petition, 'Make ... all Bishops and Pastors diligently to preach thy holy Word', and here too 'pastor' is presumably being used to represent 'priest', and not as a synonym for 'bishop'. There is also the change of 'priests' to 'ministers' in a versicle at Matins and Evensong based on *Ps* 132:9. Taken together these instances suggest that Cranmer had some misgivings about the sacerdotal connotations of the word 'priests'. However, in the first prayer for use in Ember Weeks, which was added in 1662, 'Bishops and Pastors' are clearly synonymous.
32. *The Lambeth Conference 1958*, S.P.C.K. and Seabury Press, London, 1958, 2.89.
33. The Church of South India, *The Book of Common Worship as authorised by the Synod 1962*, O.U.P. London, 1963, p. 171. (A Note at the beginning of the Book states that the Ordinal had been issued separately in 1958.)
34. World Council of Churches, Faith and Order Paper No. 111, *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*, Geneva, 1982, p. 20.
35. Chapter II, p. 27.
36. τοὺς διακόνους ὄντας μυστηρίων Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ... οὐ γὰρ βρωμάτων καὶ ποτῶν εἰσιν διάκονοι. (*Trallians* II, 3)
37. ... non accipiens communem praesbyteri<i> sp<iritu>m eum cuius participes praesbyteri sunt, sed id quod sub potestate episcopi est creditum. Qua de re episcopus solus diaconum faciat ...; Botte, op. cit., 8, p. 24; ... da spiritum gratiae et sollicitudinis in hunc seruum tuum quem elegisti ministrare ecclesiae tuae et offerre in sancto sanctorum tuo quod tibi offertur a constituto principe sacerdotum ad gloriam nominis tui, ...ibid., p. 26. (Botte follows the Verona ms. as far as *offerre* in the prayer, omitting *s<an>c<tu>m* and *et industriae*, which he considers mistaken additions by copyist or translator. The ms. is then defective, and Botte uses a Latin rendering of the Ethiopic (ed. H. Duensing, Göttingen, 1946.), which he regards as preferable to the *Testamentum Domini*. (This Ethiopic version has, of course, no connection with the Ordinal of the Ethiopian Church referred to earlier in this chapter.)
38. Chapter II, p. 27.
39. Porter, op. cit., p. 30f. Cf. the remark about *I Clement*, Chapter III, p. 33.
40. ... in Christo firmi et stabiles permanentes, dignisque successibus de inferiori gradu per gratiam tuam capere potiora mereantur ... – op. cit., p. 34f. The same words were reproduced in the Sarum rite, to which reference is made below. (W. Maskell, op. cit., p. 208)
41. Op. cit., p. 13. In this connection we should remember Jerome's complaint about deacons, cited on p. 52. On *I Tm* 3. 13, see B.S. Easton (*The Pastoral Epistles*, London, 1948, p. 134). It is interesting that Easton also remarks, with reference to the third century, that 'the deacons were intensely active in the community, while the elders had little to do except to take a dignified but usually silent part in the Sunday service and to meet as the bishop's council as occasion might demand.' (p. 184)
42. ...ut sine reprehensione et puro more ministrans gradum maioris ordinis assequatur'..., Botte, op. cit., p. 26f.
43. Dix, *The Apostolic Tradition of St. Hippolytus*, 8, p. 27.
44. ...ut, sine reprehensione et pure et munde et in mente pura ministrans, dignus sit gradu hoc magno et excelso..., Botte, op. cit., p. 26f.

Holy Orders and Completeness of the Church

45. *Diaconum oportet ministrare ad altare, evangelium legere, baptizare et praedicare* – Maskell, op. cit., p. 202.
46. *Accipe Spiritum sanctum. Quia non ad sacerdotium sed ad ministerium consecrantur* – Maskell, op. cit., p. 204. The rubric in Hippolytus is: *In diacono ordinando solus episcopus inponat manus, propterea quia non in sacerdotio ordinatur, sed in ministerio episcopi ...*, Botte, op. cit., p. 22.
47. *electis ab initio Levi filiis* – Maskell, op. cit., p. 207. The Western Church saw the Levites as prototypes of deacons and used the word as a synonym. Thus to remind the recently baptized that bishop, deacons and a presbyter had taken part in the administration of the sacrament, St Ambrose said, *summum sacerdotem, levitas et presbyterum in fonte vidisti*. (*De Sacramentis* II, SC 25, Paris, 1950, p. 67).
48. Maskell, op. cit., p. 212. It is now widely held that, in spite of the long-standing tradition, the Seven should not be thought of as 'deacons' in the later sense of the word.
49. δώρησαι δὲ αὐτῷ τὴν χάριν, ἣν ἐδώρήσω Στεφανῷ τῷ Πρωτομάρτυρι σου ... ἔχοντα τὸ μυστήριον τῆς πίστεως ἐν καθαρῇ συνειδήσει ... οἱ γὰρ καλῶς διακονήσαντες βαθμὸν ἑαυτοῖς καλὸν περιποιούνται· ΕΤΥΧΟΛΟΓΙΟΝ ΤΟ ΜΕΓΑ, p. 161. It is not easy to translate βαθμός, for in liturgical language it signifies 'rank', and is so used in the sentence preceding the quotation from *I Tm*, where the meaning is 'standing'.
50. *Magnesians* VI, 1. cf. Chapter II, p.24.
51. See note 48.
52. Interview with Fr. K. Dring, *The Tablet*, 1 May 2004, p. 14.
53. *Magnesians* VI, 1.
54. *Being as Communion*, p. 164 [his italics].
55. *The Eucharist Makes the Church*, p. 178f. (his italics), with references to various passages in Zizioulas' works.
56. *Ibid.*, p. 179 [his italics].
57. Ignatius, *Philadelphians*, IV, 1; *Smyrnaeans*, XII, 2.
58. Ignatius, *Magnesians*, VI, 1.
59. Ignatius, *Trallians*, III, 1.

VII SUMMING UP AND LOOKING AHEAD

Although many of the questions posed in Chapter I have not really been answered, attention has at least been given to some changes which, since the fourth century, have modified the 'Ignatian' structure and altered the roles of those in holy orders. While it would be absurd to assert that every alteration to that structure has necessarily involved some fundamental distortion, distortions have certainly occurred, often as a result of over-hasty and unthinking reaction to changed circumstances. Nevertheless, bishops, presbyters/priests, and deacons have nominally at least been retained by Roman Catholics, Orthodox, Anglicans and some other Churches. On the other hand, as we saw at the end of Chapter V, a pattern similar in many respects to the 'Ignatian', has manifested itself in Presbyterianism. And it should be borne in mind that in the sixteenth century Calvin and his followers regarded this system not 'as an innovation but as a rediscovery of the apostolic model found in the N.T.', although nowadays 'most Presbyterians hold that the Church in N.T. times had episcopal and congregational as well as presbyterian elements, and that Presbyterianism has no *jure divino* claim to be the only permissible or valid Church polity.'¹

This concern of Presbyterians for 're-formation' deserves to be favourably contrasted with the failure of many other Churches to subject to theological scrutiny changes involving ordained ministries. In this field Churches are too ready to ascribe all developments to the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and therefore it is good to be reminded by *The Gift of Authority* of the need to look outside the boundaries of one's own denomination:

Holy Orders and Completeness of the Church

When Christian communities are in real but imperfect communion they are called to recognise in each other elements of the apostolic Tradition which they may have rejected, forgotten or not yet fully understood.²

With this I associate a point made by the writers of *Episcopal Ministry*:

‘In a divided Church, all ministry lacks the fullness which would pertain to a single ministry in a united Church, and may therefore in some sense be described as ‘provisional.’³

These remarks lead me to repeat here what I pointed out in Chapter I, namely that in 1936 Michael Ramsey, when writing his important ecclesiological work *The Gospel and the Catholic Church*, scarcely referred to the diaconate, which Greenwood similarly ignored in 1994.⁴ These are far from untypical examples of the neglect in practice of one order by Anglicans (and others), and they lead one to ask whether this neglect is a sign of the unconscious reception of the Holy Spirit’s guidance, or, sometimes anyhow, of a failure to seek, and respond to, that guidance.⁵ The same question is raised by the fact that down the ages theologians have scarcely ever made it their business to discuss the great alterations which, from the fourth century onwards, have affected the structure of ordained ministries. In themselves these changes require ecclesiological assessment, and they ought also to be considered in the light of the way they have affected the ability of the faithful to view as ‘icons’ those who are in holy orders. Study would help towards evaluating the claims of people who, implicitly at least, insist that the present pattern obtaining in their denomination must be the result of continual guidance by the Spirit. Equally, answers are needed when people from a different angle argue that all the developments which have taken place are matters wholly explicable in political, sociological or economic terms. In fact, since theology is not a subject which admits of simple ‘right or wrong’ answers, it can have no easy method for dealing with assertions or arguments of such kinds.

Nevertheless, decisions have always had to be taken, and ‘the Christian minister exercising the *episkopè* has, ... at the heart of his

function, the responsibility of guaranteeing the apostolic character of what is being practised in his Church.⁶ A minister, on whom this responsibility falls, is left unsupported if there are no theologians to whom he can turn for advice. Yet it does seem that theologians have paid little attention to one class of problems in the realm of ecclesiology, those caused by pragmatic changes made solely for pastoral reasons. To this charge theologians might retort that they have not been asked by bishops or synods to consider such matters.

The importance of the 'Ignatian' pattern lies in the witness which, by its very existence, it bears to the Pauline principle elaborated in *I Corinthians* 12 that the Church is enriched by a variety of ministries. It is depressing to see that very frequently 'ordained ministry' is still today being spoken of in the singular, as if it comprised only a single entity instead of the orders of bishops, presbyters and deacons. It has to be admitted that Ignatius' understanding of the representatives of each of the three orders as different icons seems not to have entered deeply into the Christian consciousness by the fourth century. Had it done so, one might expect that the changes needed as a pastoral response would not have been permitted to continue in the shape which, without ecclesiological consideration, they then began to take. This failure spelt the virtual end of the 'iconic' validity of the structure upheld by Ignatius, and, in a slightly different form, by the writer of *I Clement*. What can be learnt about ministries in the 'exemplary period' specified by Zizioulas deserves to be taken seriously when the Churches of the twenty-first century confront the problems with which they are faced.

How might the ministries of bishops and presbyters have developed from the fourth century onwards? If the bishop, instead of becoming a distant potentate, had clearly remained close to the ordinary worshipping communities, although not necessarily presiding (or preaching, when he presided) at the Eucharist of each one of them every Sunday, he could still have been recognised and known as an 'icon' of Christ or of the Father.⁷ And, if the essentially corporate or collegial nature of presbyteral ministry had been maintained in association with the bishop's authority, so that jointly with him the presbyterate governed the community in a pastoral manner, then the liturgical role of the presbyter as an individual could have developed without destroying the essentials of the structure. Perhaps this was once briefly realised, at the time of the composition of the ordination

prayer quoted in Chapter VI. This refers both to the elders who assisted Moses in judging, and also to Ithamar and Eleazar, the sons of Aaron who like their father offered sacrifices.⁸

We may wish that some development of this kind had taken place, but it did not. Leaving aside, then, thoughts about what might have been, I shall quote from a lecture by E. Duffy, entitled *The papacy and the burden of history*:

In the face of history ... we cannot quite subscribe to the notion of the papacy as timeless, founded by Our Lord's command in the beginning and maintaining through all the vicissitudes of time the constant exercise of that divine mandate. But another version of that story can be told, less direct, in which the history of the papacy is the steady unfolding of its inner reality. In this version of papal theory, full weight is given to the transformations of history. What remains constant, however, is the inner reality of the papacy, a mission revealed in the biblical sources and the early history of the Church, and steadily rendered clearer and clearer in its long march through time.⁹

Here there is an obvious echo of Newman, to whom in fact Duffy had earlier referred, stating that the *Essay on Development* 'blew ... to powder' the Anglo-Catholic theory which he had put forward in his earlier writings. With the question of the validity of that theory we are not here concerned, but Duffy's way of expressing Newman's underlying thought can help towards the tentative establishment of criteria by which to assess changes affecting ordained ministries, both those made in the past and those that might be made in the present or the future.

Thus the Western transformation in practice of the diaconate into an apprenticeship for priesthood cannot be defended as 'the steady unfolding of its inner reality'. And, if we are to believe Schillebeeckx, the same verdict should be passed on 'the renewal of the diaconate as this has been carried through since Vatican II in the Roman Catholic church, for he dismisses it as something which 'comes near to a part-time ministerial activity by older people who during the week are engaged in a secular profession'.¹⁰

Again, it would be hard to defend the change in the position welcomed by, or assigned to, the laity noted in Chapter IV and again in Chapter V.¹¹ We saw that, historically explicable as it was, this had the practical effect of reducing lay Christians to being spectators at a sacred drama, and beneficiaries of the teaching and sacraments imparted to them by the clergy, instead of their continuing to be acknowledged as members of an essential order of the Church in virtue of their initiation. There have been twentieth century efforts, such as those of the Parish Communion movement and 'Parish and People',¹² to combat some aspects of clericalism and to help lay Christians recover a right understanding of their real position in the Church. Such efforts have had only limited success, but it is not clericalism alone that is at fault, for sometimes the unordained prefer the *status quo*.

In a word, the Church has for long suffered, and is still suffering, from changes which cannot fairly be considered examples of the 'unfolding of its inner reality', but are distortions because they have done much to obscure it. To put this in another way, the Church has been weakened, because the 'Ignatian structure' was not allowed to develop in accordance with its true nature – to use von Balthasar's terminology, its 'skeleton' has been weakened.¹³ Dix, whom I have often quoted, clearly regretted many changes, but seemed to accept that they could not now be called into question. But that will not be the position of those who agree with Zizioulas that there are theological questions which ought to be raised, that from the dawn of the post-apostolic age until the fourth century is an 'exemplary period',¹⁴ and that each local Church ought to exhibit the completeness of the whole Body. Indeed, it can reasonably be asserted that in asking what in fact the local Church is,¹⁵ he has provided an additional clue towards the finding of criteria. Whereas an Anglican who knows some theology will be careful to say that his local Church is his diocese, with the bishop at its head, yet the unguarded remarks of such a person will quite often indicate that actually he thinks otherwise: for him, as for most of his fellow-worshippers, the local Church in practice means the parish, presided over by the rector or vicar – perhaps nowadays having to share its incumbent with one or more other parishes. *Mutatis mutandis* I take it that the same is true also of Roman Catholics, and perhaps of Orthodox as well.

One cannot then accept as 'the steady unfolding of its inner reality' those changes in the local Church which, since the fourth century, have combined to produce a situation where an average worshipper regards it as exceptional to participate in a celebration of the Eucharist at which a member of the diaconate can be seen in action, assisting the celebrant, the diocesan (or even the area) bishop, who is himself surrounded by some of his presbyters.¹⁶ Developments almost everywhere have gone a long way towards obliterating, instead of unfolding, the 'iconic' significance of the person of the bishop, while depriving him of opportunities to exercise a ministry with an ethos which is 'paterfamilial'.

The extent to which the present situation has come to be regarded as normal is attested by some words of A. Burnham in his booklet, *The Deacon at the Eucharist*, 'For the purposes of this handbook, the difficult decision has been taken to assume that, with certain exceptions, the bishop is not present.'¹⁷ The best that can be said to counterbalance Burnham's evident regret is a remark made in 1985 by the then bishop of Oxford: 'The bishop is at least more often seen nowadays in his proper role of president of the Eucharist ... rather than simply as the visiting grandee/inquisitor.'¹⁸ But more needs to be done in order to give liturgical expression to the truth enshrined in Sykes' remark, 'it is ecclesiology which will make sense – or nonsense – of the office of a bishop.'¹⁹ Mention was made in Chapter V of the suggestion in *Episcopal Ministry* that the concept of an episcopal vicar would meet the acknowledged theological difficulty of providing an assistant, himself a bishop, to assist the diocesan.²⁰ The expression of concern for theology is to be welcomed, but unfortunately the concept does not make ecclesiological sense, if one accepts the rightness of the 'Ignatian' pattern of ordained ministries in the local Church. Somewhat inconsistently, a few pages later those responsible for the Report declare that they support 'the attempt, where it is reasonable, to return to a pattern of "one bishop, one diocese"'.²¹

Similarly, as stated above, something of importance has been lost from both the inner reality of the local Church and from the presbyterate/priesthood, when the priest is regarded primarily as an individual. The further result of this is that he (or she) can be thought of by parishioners as 'our vicar', not as being one who at times performs the bishop's liturgy at the bishop's behest, but instead as being one

who is 'the parson', who *personifies* the local Church, and who thus usurps what for Ignatius is essentially the bishop's role.²² Again, the deacon – if there happens to be one – has also lost his or her genuine ministry, because its inner reality has not unfolded through appropriate development. Instead, as we have seen, it has degenerated to the point where it has become, in the eyes of many Roman Catholics and Anglicans, no more than an apprenticeship for the priesthood – except in the case of those not allowed to become priests. Nevertheless we have seen that there are also some signs which give hope for a revival in differing ways of a genuine diaconate on the lines advocated by the Report *For such a time as this*. It is sad that the same can scarcely yet be said as regards the ministry of priesthood and its present individualised form.

Applicable to this imperfect state of affairs is a perceptive remark in *The Gift of Authority*:

Within the Church the memory of the people of God may be affected or even distorted by human finitude and sin. Even though promised the assistance of the Holy Spirit, the churches from time to time lose sight of aspects of the apostolic Tradition. ... Fresh recourse to Tradition in a new situation is the means by which God's revelation in Christ is recalled.²³

In contrast to that with which we are now familiar, there was clearly portrayed in the writings of Ignatius of Antioch, a structure of ministries, pointing to the completeness of the Church. The aim, then, of those who accept that the Church of England (or other Churches) ought to try to regain such completeness might be a quick, thorough-going revolution as regards holy orders. But that, history suggests, is not the best way to proceed.

And this view is reinforced when one takes account of the consequences of two differing attempts at liturgical reform in the twentieth century. The 1928 revision of the *Book of Common Prayer* was accepted by the Convocations and the Church Assembly, but never authorised by Parliament. It could not therefore be imposed on clergy and congregations, but in practice it began unofficially to be used in many places. The result was that the parts which proved acceptable were widely adopted with little opposition. It was in any

case a conservative revision, if one compares it with the *Alternative Service Book*. The latter, which appeared in 1980 and was officially superseded at the end of 2000, was in many respects revolutionary. Although by its very title it was declared to be not a replacement for the *B.C.P.* but an alternative, many of those in authority exercised a good deal of pressure, in order to promote it as the book normally to be used. While it was undoubtedly welcomed by many, there are also many others who either accepted it unwillingly or voted against it with their feet. Moreover the scope it gave for an almost infinite number of alternatives implanted, in many of those responsible for the conduct of worship, an urge to devise yet further unauthorised variations and experiments of their own. This is a recent example of what history has shown repeatedly, that revolutions can all too easily get out of hand. As far as the Church of England is concerned, there has for some time been what can only be described as liturgical chaos, and the situation has probably been made worse as a result of the even greater number of variations allowed since *Common Worship* has replaced the *A.S.B.*

Consideration ought therefore to be given to finding a non-revolutionary method of proceeding in order to bring about a renewal of the Church and its ministries. More satisfactory than a revolution, and in any case more likely to have a prospect of success, would be an attempt to steer change gradually in the right direction. We have already remarked in Chapter V on the way in which the Church of England has divided many large or very populous dioceses into ‘episcopal areas’, presided over by suffragan bishops. In spite of its being open, in its present form, to some ecclesiological criticism, this development can be seen as at least a small improvement.

In the same chapter favourable mention was also made of the scheme which, under the Act of Synod to provide for those who cannot accept the decision to ordain women to the priesthood, has established three Provincial Episcopal Visitors (‘flying bishops’). One of these, Edwin Barnes, was quoted as saying that his ministry is very similar to that of a Roman Catholic bishop holding a ‘personal prelateure’. One can envisage possible extensions of the practice, which in the Church of Rome operates as yet only as regards OPUS DEI and its members, and Barnes must now be further quoted:

Although such a prelature would not be a 'particular church', in the sense in which a Roman Catholic diocese is seen as a particular church, nevertheless it would be comparable with a particular church... We [in the Church of England] are unlikely to want to define or legalise the development as carefully or thoroughly as Rome has done, but looking at the Roman system might help us to appreciate that here is a genuine development of ecclesiology, not just a pragmatic expedient ...²⁴

It is interesting that a plea for something similar has recently come from a leading Australian Evangelical, Peter Jensen, archbishop of Sydney. He has asserted that 'the time has come to relax church practices and actively encourage church leaders to have non-territorial episcopal oversight.'²⁵ Jensen, like Barnes, is reacting to the tensions that have arisen between Anglicans who hold radically different beliefs.

If suggestions such as these of Barnes and Jensen are put into practice, one can envisage the formation of communities consisting of bishops, priests, deacons, and members of the laity, and resembling the 'Ignatian' pattern. It is worth adding that in 1947, the Anglo-Catholic authors of *Catholicity*, a report presented to the archbishop of Canterbury (Fisher), had already declared:

The appeal to the *historic episcopate* will mean the recovery of the true place of the Bishop in the Church, not as the organiser of a vast administrative machine, but as the guardian and exponent of the faith, as the bond of sacramental unity, and as an organ of the Body of Christ in true constitutional relation to the presbyters and people.²⁶

There is, of course, an obvious danger that if the territorial unit is replaced by one amounting to a self-selected community, each particular church may become an inward-looking clique, itself perhaps a prey to personal rivalries and jealousies. The situation at Corinth, which led to the writing of *I Clement*, ought to be borne in mind. However, this potential danger should be seen in the context of another

factor to which Samuel L. Edwards, who as we have seen advocates a 'paterfamilial episcopate', has called attention:

Perhaps the most important aspect of the recovery of this earlier model of the episcopate is its emphasis that the *magisterium* of the episcopate is based entirely upon orthodoxy: where such an emphasis is present, it tends to foster a situation in which the teacher is seen as leader, but the people are following the teaching, not the teacher.²⁷

This assessment may to some extent be over-optimistic, but with its stress on the importance of the giving of orthodox teaching by the bishop, it certainly deserves to be taken into account.²⁸ In any case no system is immune to the 'infection of nature' which, as the ninth of the *XXXIX Articles* says, remains even in those who 'are regenerated'. The best that can be done, therefore, is to try to devise safeguards which will make it less likely that defects will arise, but here G.R. Evans utters a pertinent warning:

Every age has its models. Today's danger is of seeking to replace a paternalistic or 'imperial' model with a crudely democratic one in which one imbalance supplants another; for democracy is not necessarily identical with 'fellowship', or the majority vote an expression of that consensus which must be unanimity.²⁹

To support this warning against the assumption that without democracy of the Parliamentary kind the people of God will be unable to express themselves and get their views taken into account, *Episcopal Ministry* can also be appropriately quoted here. With reference to 'the Orthodox perception of a bishop in countries where the Orthodox Church is deeply rooted', it states:

Flowing robes, hat, veil, staff, all contribute to an overall image and create a kind of 'otherness' which does not necessarily mean distance or unapproachability in a Western sense. Indeed, traditionally, Eastern bishops are very approachable, holding court for all present to present their

pleas, as Ambrose of Milan did at the end of the fourth century in the West.³⁰

If with proper safeguards an episcopal system such as that suggested above could be established, it might very well produce communities manifesting a quality of Christian life which is not in evidence in territorial dioceses as they are at present. It would not, of course, be necessary to use either the somewhat exotic epithet 'paterfamilial', or the term 'personal prelature', which could be felt to be redolent of the cult of personality. In Chapter V it was pointed out that the principle of the territorial diocese has long proved impossible to maintain in practice. Although its restoration is certainly desired by many and should not be lost sight of, this will have to await something equally to be desired, the reunion of Christendom. As things are, it seems realistic to advocate in many places 'church units', composed of Christians wishing, as members of the Church, to come together because they are in agreement about matters of faith and order which they regard as important. Indeed, since unity in a given locality need not and should not mean the imposition of a uniform mode of worship on all Christians living there, it is possible that even the ultimate goal should not be territorial dioceses at all, but 'church units' in communion with one another, worshipping in ways which differ but which all express the same fundamental orthodox belief.

Furthermore, at a time when many have shorter working hours and/or the opportunity of early retirement (voluntary or compulsory), there might – *pace* Schillebeeckx – quite easily be recruited a comparatively large number of people to serve as non-stipendiary ministers. The word 'recruit' was used deliberately, for as I have written elsewhere,³¹ I hold that, where ministries are concerned, the Church has the right and duty to take the initiative in inviting a response from any of its members whom it perceives to have, at least potentially, the required gifts. Appropriate methods of training would need to be worked out in order that those who responded might be equipped as well as possible for their future spheres of service. Through arriving at, or in truth regaining, this kind of understanding of ministers and ministries, the Church would be recovering something akin to the understanding implicit in the 'Ignatian' pattern, but the underlying motivation would be evangelical rather than archaeological.

The aim would thus be that each 'church unit' (by definition we could no longer speak territorially of a 'local church') should be able to perceive itself (in a theological, not algebraic fashion³²) as an 'icon' of the whole Body of Christ on earth. Provision would therefore need to be made to enable those initiated by baptism, confirmation – or its equivalent – , and communion, to understand that they had been ordained as members of the laity; the majority of them would remain as such, but from amongst those showing evidence of possessing, potentially at least, the necessary gifts, as many as were required would be chosen for the diaconate, given appropriate training, and then ordained deacons; similarly others, or perhaps some who had served in the diaconate (males only, in communities upholding traditional orthodoxy), would be selected as having the qualities needed for membership of the college of presbyters, and after being trained would then be ordained to the priesthood.³³ As Green says, 'Such people need not attend a theological college, provided that they were carefully trained on the job, supervised and encouraged.'³⁴ When a new bishop was required, he would be sought (and elected by whatever method had been agreed) from amongst the presbyters and deacons of his own or of some other church. If a deacon, he should probably be ordained/consecrated bishop *per saltum*.

It is impossible to see clearly enough into the future to prophesy how exactly these 'church units' might be formed, how large they would be, and where and how they would meet for worship and for dealing with matters concerning their common life. One can foresee that it might not be uncommon for the bishop to delegate to one or other of his presbyters the duty of presiding at the Eucharist, but matters would have to be so arranged that all felt this to be a departure from the norm, instead of the standard procedure. (There would, of course, be no question of accepting 'lay presidency' so long as the community was seeking to adhere to orthodox ecclesiology.) The emphasis, however, would always have to be on the presbyterate's being seen to be essentially corporate. The developments suggested might well be accompanied by some changes in the rites of ordination, particularly such as would enhance the collegial aspect of the ministry of presbyters.

As well as in the context of worship, the bishop should once again be seen to belong to the college of presbyters, its president but in administrative matters not acting independently of it. The bishop in

the time of Ignatius was 'surrounded by the *college* of presbyters (he was in fact one of the presbyters himself)'.³⁵ By means of this college collective pastoral leadership would be provided and discipline would be exercised when required. As Michael Green wrote,

The presbyterate in the early church showed a far more corporate oversight than most modern churches. The virtual autocracy of many a parish priest or nonconformist minister is good neither for him nor for the congregation.³⁶

The importance of gaining or regaining such a presbyterate is also brought out in a recent book mentioned earlier, written by Fritz Lobinger, a Roman Catholic priest working in South Africa. Aware of the pattern of the early Church, but impelled by his knowledge of the acute shortage of priests in many parts of the world, he advocates the ordination, as non-stipendiaries, of married men who have shown themselves to be community leaders, '*viri probati*.' On pragmatic grounds, he argues emphatically against the ordination of one such married man here and another there, but in favour of ordaining several men who would work together as a team.³⁷ He insists that such priests, together with the existing celibates, must be welded in each diocese into one presbyterium.³⁸

In the possible English Anglican scheme I am sketching, it would be reasonable to expect that the stipendiary ministers would include the bishop, at least one deacon as his administrative assistant, and one or two presbyters primarily responsible for the pastoral care of members of the 'church unit', who would be assisted by the non-stipendiary presbyters belonging to the team. Such a plan might thus require perhaps four to six in holy orders for whose financial support the rest of the community would have to take responsibility, but it might be the case that even one or two of these ministers would be able to have part-time secular employment and so would not require a full stipend. To be borne in mind is one of Green's suggestions as regards deacons, that many of them should be ordained 'not as a stepping-stone to the priesthood, but in recognition of the charism of practical assistance evidenced in their lives. Such a ministry might be paid or voluntary.'³⁹

One can also foresee the likelihood of circumstances in which which it would be good to recruit, train, and ordain as non-stipendiary

deacons people, who would fulfil the functions now in many places being undertaken by lay 'Eucharistic ministers'. (These are men and women authorised by the bishop to assist in the administration of communion in church, and also to take the reserved sacrament to the sick, and their ministry is in reality diaconal.) But the diaconate should manifest the Church's concern not just with its own members, but also with the surrounding society. 'Deacons ... grounded in the teaching and worship of the Body of Christ, carry the good news in word and sacrament, and through compassionate service, to those whom Christ came to seek and to save.' And this could and should include 'general pastoral visitation ... [which] is perhaps now one of the weakest aspects of the Church's ministry ...'⁴⁰

It may now occur to readers that this pattern has some affinities with the Methodist pattern of 'circuits' presided over by a 'superintendent' minister – and 'superintendent', after all, could be an English rendering of *ἐπίσκοπος*. In the course of history the geographical size of English Methodist circuits has actually varied greatly: at first they were sometimes very large in area, but growth in the nineteenth century led frequently to smaller circuits, with in some cases no more than one ordained minister. Today a circuit usually has a small team of ordained ministers, with occasionally a non-stipendiary among them, the team being headed by a superintendent. Lay ministers in a circuit include local preachers, class leaders and stewards. If the circuit had a superintendent (ordained as a bishop), assisted both by other (stipendiary) ministers and/or 'local preachers' (ordained as presbyters), and in a different way by stewards (ordained to the diaconate),⁴¹ one would arrive at very much the pattern sketched above.

Whichever body of Christians we have in mind, if we are looking to the future, no detailed planning ought to be undertaken far in advance. What is important at all times is that when changes are required, they should be made not as improvised responses to the urgent demands of the moment, but on the basis of a well thought-out ecclesiology and as elements that will contribute to the ultimate attainment of completeness. And completeness will be reached only when Christian unity has been attained. The sketch outlined above must therefore be regarded as no more than a possible first draft of a provisional scheme concerning holy orders, a scheme which has the aim of remedying

damage done in the period which began with the so-called 'Edict of Milan'. Should the question be asked, 'How do you envisage that a restored completeness will be manifested in the structure of the local church?', no attempt should at present be made to give answers that enter into specific details. There is bound to be unpredictability, and while those who hope for a restoration of completeness may rightly regard as exemplary the period from the post-apostolic age until the fourth century,⁴² they need also to be careful not to become 'Ignatian fundamentalists'. When what is longed for does appear, we may be confident that Christians will recognise and welcome it. Meanwhile, even small changes which can be seen to be expressions of 'the unfolding of [the Church's] inner reality'⁴³ will gladden those who desire completeness and who acknowledge their debt to Ignatius of Antioch and the 'iconic' and structured pattern of ministries which can be found in his writings.

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1. *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, 'Presbyterianism', p. 1322.
 2. *Op. cit.*, 31, p. 24.
 3. *Op. cit.*, p. 245.
 4. Ramsey, p. 15; Greenwood, p. 77.
 5. Cf. *Episcopal Ministry*, p. 167, 'If God never forces his people's consent it must follow that the Spirit's guidance is not irresistible and that the Church in history, humanly sinful and fallible, has not necessarily at all times been perfectly responsive to its infallible guide.'
 6. J-M.R. Tillard, *Church of Churches*, p. 184.
 7. Cf. T. Hopko's remark: 'Many Orthodox today ... rightly believe that it is traditionally orthodox to see the church's bishops as "icons of God" and "other Christs" who "hold the place of God" in their respective churches ... The problem is that these apostolic and early patristic teachings, with the images used to describe the local church leaders, have come to be interpreted in a context completely different from that in which they were originally elaborated. They no longer have the meaning they had when each bishop functioned in a small city church ...' ('On Ecclesial Conciliarity,' *The Legacy of St Vladimir*, p. 220f.)
 8. Chapter VI, p. 92f.
 9. *The Tablet*, 4 July 1998, p. 872 – abridged version of *The Tablet* Open Day lecture, 25 June 1998.
 10. *The Church with a Human Face*, p. 266.
 11. Chapters IV & V, p. 50f, 80.
 12. Cf. P.J. Jagger, *A History of the Parish and People Movement*, Faith Press, Leighton Buzzard, 1978.
 13. Chapter I, p. 18, n. 41.
 14. Chapter I, p. 16, n. 33.
 15. Chapter IV, p. 50, n. 19.
 16. However, T. Price (*Evangelical Anglicans and the Lima Text*, Bramcote, 1985, p. 20) remarks: 'One of the surprises of the present-day ecumenical movement

Holy Orders and Completeness of the Church

- is that it has become so enthusiastic about this threefold ministry.' He then quotes the recommendation of 'this particular pattern' in the Lima Text, *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*, W.C.C., 1982.
17. Op. cit., London, 1992, p. 5.
 18. *All Are Called – Towards a Theology of the Laity*, p. 36. cf. *Episcopal Ministry*, p. 162, 'The bishop must know and be known by the people in the midst of whom he administers the sacraments'.
 19. S. Sykes, op. cit., p. 188.
 20. Op. cit., p. 198f. – mentioned Chapter V, p. 83, n.9.
 21. Op. cit., p. 204–206.
 22. Cf. p. 83, n. 2. – Ignatius encountered the whole Church in Ephesus in the person of its bishop, Onesimus, *Ephesians* I, 3.
 23. Op. cit., 25, p. 21f. Cf. also 16, p. 17, 'Apostolic Tradition is a gift of God which must be constantly received anew'.
 24. *New Directions*, December 1995, p. 6.
 25. *New Directions*, February 2003, p. 26.
 26. *Catholicity*, Westminster, 1947, p. 54f. It will not surprise readers of the foregoing chapters that the convenor of the group that produced this report was Dom Gregory Dix.
 27. Samuel L. Edwards, 'A Light at Nightfall: The Dissolution of Christendom as an Opportunity for Anglican Renewal', in *The Future of Anglicanism*, p. 151. Beside Edwards' remarks may be set: 'By their *sensus fidei* the faithful are able in conscience both to recognise God at work in the bishop's exercise of authority, and also to respond to it as believers.' (*The Gift of Authority*, 36, p. 27) Cf. also Chapter II, p. 25, Dix on the bishop as teacher. Notice too the quotation from N. Lash, Chapter VIII, p. 141, n. 22, regarding a lack of expectation on the part of contemporary Roman Catholics that their bishop will give them teaching.
 28. E. Schillebeeckx, in his description of the appointment of a bishop in the early Church, writes: 'The local church tests the apostolic faith of the candidate and bears witness to it. ... The community which receives him first examines the apostolic foundation of his faith.' – *The Church with a Human Face* p. 134. He cites *Constitutiones Apostolorum* 8 (F.X. Funk, *Didascalia et Constitutiones Apostolorum* 1, Paderborn, 1905, p. 564–93), which, however, provides only rather vague support for his assertion.
 29. G.R. Evans, *Authority in the Church*, p. 21. cf. *Episcopal Ministry*, p. 104 for comments about 'the Parliamentary model on which our national Synodical Government is largely based'.
 30. Op. cit., p. 44.
 31. H.J.M. Turner, *Ordination and Vocation*, Worthing, 1990, esp. Chapters II and III; H.J.M. Turner, 'Ordination and vocation' in *Order and Ministry*, p.125–141.
 32. Cf. Chapter II, p. 29.
 33. Cf. R. Greenwood, *Transforming Priesthood*, p. 167: 'The bishop, with the people's consent and advice, should ordain as eucharistic president such persons as are focusing and distributing the ministry of the local church.'
 34. M. Green, *Freed to Serve*, p. 37.
 35. J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 250.
 36. *Freed to Serve*, p. 47.
 37. *Like His Brothers and Sisters – Ordaining Community Leaders*, Philippines, 1998, / New York, 1999.
 38. Ibid., p. 167–169.
 39. *Freed to Serve*, p. 56.

40. *For such a time as this*, pp.22, 54.

41. Methodism, as stated in Chapter VI, also has a diaconal order, the majority of its members being women, although there are now a few male deacons, and this order has its own training college.

42. Cf. the quotation from McPartlan in Chapter I, p.16.

43. Adapted from the quotation on p. 117, referring to the papacy (E. Duffy).

VIII BEYOND THE LOCAL CHURCH

My subject has been the local church (perhaps in the shape of a 'church unit'), together with its completeness and its pattern of ministries, and so Chapter VII might have formed the conclusion of this essay. Yet something more is needed, because however fully any such unit manifests completeness, none of them by itself can be the whole state of Christ's Church, militant here in earth. Since then no local church exists in isolation, it would be wrong to end having not even mentioned provinces and national Churches, nor said anything about the Bishop of Rome and his claim to universal primacy.

Most of this final chapter will in fact focus on Rome. Bishop Kallistos Ware wrote a few years ago, 'We Orthodox habitually claim that our understanding of the Church is eucharistic. ... But does not eucharistic ecclesiology prove in practice unworkable unless it is accompanied by a firm and viable doctrine of primacy?'¹ Again, as quoted by an Anglican observer,

At the 1988 Lambeth Conference, John Zizioulas said, 'The theology that justifies, or even (as an Orthodox, and perhaps an Anglican, too, would add) *necessitates* the ministry of episcopacy, on the level of the local church, the same theology underlies also the need for a primacy on the regional or even the universal level.'²

This, however, must be distinguished from something which Zizioulas sees as characteristic of Roman Catholic theology, 'the tendency ... to give priority to the bishop's attachment to the universal

college over his attachment to a particular church.³ It is obvious that such problems demand extensive treatment, but it is impossible here to do more than add a few remarks as a kind of appendix. Yet this must be done lest the local church, with which the preceding chapters of this essay have been concerned, should appear to usurp a position which does not belong to it.

In the New Testament it can be seen that, from the earliest days, members of the churches in different localities felt that they were in fellowship with one another, or felt that at least they ought to be.⁴ There was, of course, no formal constitution, but *Galatians* suggests that the church of Jerusalem, with James, 'the Lord's brother' at its head, was trying, perhaps successfully, to exercise some supervisory authority over other churches.⁵ After the fall of Jerusalem in AD 70 it was natural that the position of leadership should pass to the church in Rome, the capital of the empire. *I Clement* seems to speak of Rome as the place of the martyrdoms of St Peter and St Paul,⁶ and the very fact that the letter was written shows that the Roman church was conscious of feeling some responsibility towards other local churches. Ignatius greeted the church of Rome as 'having the presidency of love', or 'pre-eminence in love'.⁷

At the same time, the fact that Ignatius wrote also to churches in Asia Minor testifies to the sense of fellowship existing between Christian communities in a particular region. Furthermore, Hippolytus in the early third century took it for granted that, for the continuance of episcopal ministry, local churches were mutually interdependent: each church, after its bishop had died, needed bishops of neighbouring churches to come and consecrate its new bishop-elect. As well as this, 'each bishop is both a voice for the local church and one through whom the local church learns from other churches.'⁸

It was thus only to be expected that, as circumstances required or permitted, there should gradually come to exist regional, provincial or national groupings of churches, on a more or less formal basis. In North Africa, for example, there are indications of other bishoprics coming under the primacy of the bishop of Carthage as early as the third century. But we need not spend time discussing such groupings, for they are not immutable, nor is the existence of any particular one of them essential, even though 'the mutual interdependence of all the

churches is integral to the reality of the Church as God wills it to be.⁹ The concept of the mutual interdependence of all the churches gives rise, it must be admitted, to problems for ecclesiology, when heresy or schism leads to the separation or exclusion of a local or regional church from the larger body.¹⁰ This is a subject which, while here it can only be mentioned in passing without any discussion, has now for many years been a focus of Christian concern as a result of the Ecumenical Movement.

It is the papacy that must now be briefly discussed, both because of its theologically-based claim to authority, and also because those in communion with the see of Rome make up at least half the total number of living Christians. There is of course a long history of disputes concerning claims made by, or on behalf of, the bishops of Rome, but it should not be forgotten that, as we saw in Chapter II, the church of Rome was apparently not monepiscopal in the first century or even early in the second. When the Roman church had established at its head a single bishop, this man naturally became the personal embodiment of the prestige which his church enjoyed. Nevertheless for a long time everything was undefined. A sentence in Irenaeus, whatever its exact meaning be, seems to declare that it is needful for every local church to resort to, or agree with, that of Rome. (*Ad hanc enim ecclesiam propter potentiolem principalitatem necesse est omnem convenire ecclesiam, hoc est, eos qui sunt undique fideles ...*.) Whatever this means, it certainly does not amount to an assertion of universal jurisdiction legally defined.¹¹ In summing up his theological/historical review of the papacy, Tillard wrote:

The Roman 'primacy' belongs to the mystery of the Church in her pilgrimage on earth; it could not be dispensed with without doing violence to God's plan ... The bishop of Rome is the sentinel who 'watches' over the people of God, which is his true function; but he often prefers to act as if he were the only one in charge, instead of alerting the bishops as authentic pastors in the Church of God.¹²

Much earlier Dix had written something to the same effect, when he compared the role of the pre-Nicene bishop in the local Church with that of the Church of Rome *vis-à-vis* the Catholic Church as a whole:

This 'sentinelship' of the bishop corresponds to that special duty *excubare*, 'to mount guard for all who call on the Name of the Lord', which was recognized as incumbent upon Rome.¹³

For this conception of the primacy of Rome, one source is the letter written by the Roman clergy to the clergy of Carthage on the occasion of the martyrdom of St Cyprian, which occurred in 258. It is referred to both by Tillard and by Dix who cites from it the words in quotation marks above.¹⁴

The idea of the personal embodiment of this primacy in the bishop of Rome was expressed by St Leo the Great. He was pope from 440 until his death in 461, and in a sermon preached on the anniversary of his consecration,¹⁵ he claimed that as the heir of St Peter he had inherited Peter's responsibility for watching over Christ's sheep and over their pastors, the bishops, whose primate he was. Similarly, in a letter addressed to the bishops of different parts of Italy and 'all the provinces', Leo stated that he was responsible for correcting abuses throughout the Church because God had willed that he should be a watchman.¹⁶ Some 350 years separate Leo from the writer of *I Clement*, but both of them appear to have felt much the same kind of responsibility towards churches other than that of Rome.

Let us move on to the present. If the visible union of all the mainstream Christian communions is ever to be realised, it is necessary to face the question of the rightful position of the bishop of Rome in a genuinely Catholic Church. In 1947, after reflecting upon Pius XII's encyclical *Mystici Corporis*, an Orthodox monk, a Frenchman, wrote a letter to the editor of *Irénikon*, the journal of the abbey of Chevetogne.¹⁷ In this he referred to the nostalgia which 'the old Roman formulas of *sollicitudo omnium ecclesiarum* and *servus servorum* awaken in Orthodox souls'. He added:

Those who approve of this nostalgia think that this primacy of humility, service and love is in God's intention and in the ancient tradition of the Church not simply a primacy of honour or a nebulous sort of leadership, but a unique pastoral mission. They could not consider complete any ecclesiology where freedom in the Holy Spirit, the Catholic and apostolic tradition and the charisma of Peter were not in harmony.

Holy Orders and Completeness of the Church

From another quarter may be cited a remark by Roger Schutz, the prior of the Taizé community, who wrote some years ago:

Will it be possible much longer to seek communion among Christians without accepting the ministry of a pastor of pastors and communities, who embodies in himself the service of mercy? ¹⁸

In 1998 Cardinal E. Cassidy, invited to speak at the Lambeth Conference of Anglican Bishops, referred to the need for ‘some form of universal authority’.¹⁹ His words have since been strikingly echoed in the latest report of the Anglican–Roman Catholic International Commission, *The Gift of Authority*. This has been described as seeking ‘to show that the papal teaching ministry is ... a gift of God to the Church. It does not use the word “infallibility” in reference to papal teaching authority, but states that in certain circumstances the Bishop of Rome has the duty to discern and make explicit the authentic faith of the whole Church.’²⁰

But, as C. Hill observes, there is more than this to be said, because

visible unity at all levels except the global is an ecumenical nonsense. ... Any primatial exercise of *episcopate* however remains episcopal ... A bishop exercising pastoral episcopate at a wider level than his immediate jurisdiction is still exercising an episcopal ministry. But such ministry is not an ‘ordinary’ jurisdiction; which Vatican I was wrong (according to most Anglicans) to attribute to the Bishop of Rome. ²¹

Let me attach to this a remark made a few years ago concerning a development of an Ultramontane nature which is the opposite of traditional:

Whatever one thinks of the assertion, in canon 329 of the 1917 code, that the Roman pontiff nominates bishops ‘without restriction’ (*‘eos libere nominat Romanus Pontifex’*), it was certainly not a conservative statement, but a radical innovation.

Whatever one's assessment of the increasing power and influence over diocesan affairs of the Roman Curia and its network of nuncios, these things are recent innovations.²²

Unfortunately, there are no signs of any change for the better. On the contrary,

A five-page letter signed by Cardinal Lucas Moreira Neves, prefect of the Congregation for Bishops, rejected the [Austrian] proposals for involving the local Church in episcopal nominations ... It made the extraordinary claim that the Pope must not be 'hindered' in appointing bishops by lists of names sent in by local Churches.²³

What is claimed here is something altogether different from the kind of primatial ministry exercised by Leo the Great, which could be seen as a genuinely 'evangelical' development, needed by a potentially worldwide community. If the problem of the relationship between the Church as a whole and the local churches or prelatures were approached along the lines of the quotations taken from Leo, this certainly would prove acceptable to some, perhaps many, within the Roman obedience. On the subject of the papacy of John Paul II, Duffy writes:

The rhetoric of shared responsibility with other bishops has often been belied by increasing Vatican intervention in local churches, not least in some disastrous, and disastrously unpopular, episcopal appointments ...

The energies released by the Second Vatican Council seem to point the Church in the direction of greater cultural and theological pluralism, more lay participation, less hierarchy, more dialogue. The abilities and inclination of the last Pope of the twentieth century seem to point elsewhere, to a more exalted, lonely and hierarchic vision of the papal office and the Church it serves – or rules.²⁴

However saintly any pope may be, if he exercises his authority in this way, he will obviously fail to commend it to Christians who are not Roman Catholics. Not only so, but amongst those in communion

with Rome there are many loyal men and women who desire a more collegial style of papacy. Here it is appropriate to cite a parallel from the past: in the pre-Constantinian local church, the bishop's authority was not personal in the sense of being a prerogative of which he might avail himself independently. As Tillard wrote:

In the early centuries a bishop never acted in isolation, but always in fellowship with his *presbyterium*, even in matters involving complex issues of jurisdiction.

Having made this statement, and buttressed it with a quotation from Dix, he continued with the significant sentence:

This must by analogy apply to the relation between the bishop of Rome and the other bishops. He will not act in isolation, stating a doctrine, expressing a tradition, or giving an interpretation of what is revealed, which are not those of the Church.²⁵

It is also worth quoting an interesting remark made by the radical Dominican theologian Schillebeeckx:

The ministerial principle of unity is ... embodied in the Petrine function in the church, while the ministerial principle of many-coloured and polycentric catholicity is embodied in the episcopal college, spread all over the world.²⁶

We may sum up by saying that, on the one hand, those who are not at present members of the Roman Communion will continue to reject papal claims of the kind envisaged by Vatican I and apparently in practice not repudiated by John Paul II; on the other hand, many or most Orthodox and Anglicans, while not isolating the bishop of Rome from other bishops, would not only have no difficulty in according him a primacy of honour, but might also agree to acknowledge him as both in some sense the successor of St Peter, and also as the 'sentinel' or 'watchman' of the Church militant here in earth. And much as some Roman Catholics may dislike various ways in which the present Pope exercises his authority, it is greatly to his credit that he has invited other Christian Churches to explain to him frankly their difficulties

about the actual *modus operandi* of the primacy of the see of Rome and of its incumbent. One must hope for positive, well-considered and reasonably prompt responses to this invitation.

The matters which have given rise to disputes about the see of Rome and the papacy will have to be looked at from two angles, neither of which can in practice be viewed in isolation. First, there will be needed a theological examination as to how the authority of the 'Petrine office' belonging to the bishop of Rome should be defined *vis-à-vis* the authority of the bishop of each diocese, whether understood geographically or as some form of 'personal prelature', or 'church unit'. Perhaps a basis for this authority will be found in the concept of 'watchman' or 'sentinel'. In the second place, consideration will have to be given to the means by which a pope would in future be enabled to discharge his legitimate functions with regard to the worldwide Christian community. In effect, this must inevitably mean that the Curia would have to be restricted to a role much more modest than that which it has had for many centuries. In token of such a restriction, but incidentally giving proper honour to the diaconate, it would be good if high Curial officials were once again deacons, like the assistants of early popes, and no longer titular bishops with no real local churches over which to preside.

The completeness of the Church has to do with what can be seen both at the local and at the worldwide level. All that has been said in previous chapters can therefore in no sense be regarded as separable from what has been briefly discussed in this the final one. A salutary warning, which has been given by T. Hopko, deserves to be borne in mind:

One of the main criticisms of Ignatian 'eucharistic ecclesiology' is that its stressing of the catholic fulness of the local eucharistic community can lead to a wrong 'self-sufficiency' of local dioceses and a dangerous weakening of the essential communion which must exist between them.²⁷

This point is implicitly recognised in *The Gift of Authority*, which has, as the heading for one of its sections, 'Tradition and Apostolicity: The Local Church's "Amen" in the Communion of the Churches.'²⁸

Furthermore from the Orthodox angle, Zizioulas seems well aware that concern for proper episcopacy in the local church demands parallel concern for regional and universal primacy – this is shown by the words quoted in this chapter from his address to Anglican bishops.²⁹ If in many places territorial dioceses ought to be superseded by ‘church units’ of the types outlined in Chapter VII, there would still, perhaps more than ever, be a need for primacies, both regional and universal, in order to maintain the unity of Christians in essential matters of faith and practice. A reformed papal primacy would not mean an automatic end to controversies, for it is foolish to suppose that either that expressions of legitimate variety would never pass beyond due bounds, or that a concern for doctrinal truth and the well-being of the whole Church would never express itself in a domineering fashion. The right kind of primacy, however, is essential for the completeness of the Church.

Although in practice some Christians will always feel more concern for the universal Church and others for its local manifestations, neither aspect may safely be ignored when discussion takes place concerning those in holy orders and the ‘iconic’ significance of what they are and do. What is required is discussion not simply in terms of pastoral needs (however pressing) or of interdenominational diplomacy, but in terms of sound theology, a discussion entered into by theologians who recognise that there is much to be learnt from the past history of the people of God. With such a beginning followed by appropriate action, we may hope that completeness will, at the time when God sees fit, be manifested and be recognisable, both in individual local churches and in the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church, spread throughout the world.

1. ‘The Estonian crisis: a salutary warning?’, *Sobornost*, 18:2, 1996, pp. 66f.

2. J. Baycroft, ‘An Emerging Ecumenical Consensus on Papal Primacy?’, *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* XXXV, 3-4, Summer-Fall 1998, Philadelphia, p. 368. Cf. *Being as Communion*, p. 133, ‘Because of the lack of a proper synthesis between Christology and Pneumatology in Orthodox ecclesiology, it is often too easily assumed that eucharistic ecclesiology leads to the priority of the local Church over the universal, to a kind of “congregationalism”’.

3. *Being as Communion*, p. 202, n. 113. (McPartlan cites this when discussing the views of H. de Lubac, *The Eucharist Makes the Church*, p. 110f.).

4. *Rm.* 15: 25ff.; 3 *Jn* 9f.

5. *Ga.* 2: 12.

6. *I Clem.* 5, 6.

7. *Rom.*, introductory greeting – προκαθήμενη τῆς ἀγάπης. The rendering, 'presidency' is that of J.B. Lightfoot, *The Apostolic Fathers*, London, 1891 (reprinted 1926), p. 150, while 'pre-eminence' comes from O. Cullmann, *Peter Disciple – Apostle – Martyr*, (tr. F.V. Filson) London, 1953, p. 233.
8. *The Gift of Authority*, 38, p. 28. Cf. *Episcopal Ministry*, p. 32, n. 24.
9. *The Gift of Authority*, 37, p. 27.
10. Cf. S.L. Greenslade's book, *Schism in the Early Church*, London, 1953.
11. *Adv. Haer.* iii, 2. In SC 211, Paris, 1974, A. Rousseau and L. Doutreleau print the following as a reconstruction of the original Greek: πρὸς ταύτην γὰρ τὴν ἐκκλησίαν διὰ τὴν ἰκανωτέραν ἀρχὴν ἀνάγκη πᾶσαν συμφωνεῖν ἐκκλησίαν, τοῦτεστι τοὺς πανταχόθεν πιστοὺς... (SC 211, p. 33). In SC 210 p. 228 - 236, they discuss the passage containing these words. They regard it virtually certain that τὴν ... ἀρχὴν to have been the Greek translated *principalitatem* (p. 230), and argue convincingly that for Irenaeus the pre-eminence of the Roman church is due to its having been founded by the apostles Peter and Paul. (p. 229) In the same volume they set forth the principles on the basis of which they have reconstructed the Greek. (p. 142–148) Their French translation runs, *avec cette Eglise en raison de son origine plus excellente, doit nécessairement s'accorder toute Eglise, c'est-à-dire les fidèles de partout ...* (p. 229) It is worth adding that these editors interpret Irenaeus as meaning, *si l'Eglise de Rome possède une si exceptionnelle dignité, c'est parce que, en la personne d'Eleuthère, son douzième évêque, c'est la voix des apôtres Pierre et Paul qui ne cesse de s'y faire entendre.* (p. 230)
12. J-M. R. Tillard, *The Bishop of Rome*, p. 91, headed *By way of conclusion*.
13. G. Dix, *Jurisdiction in the Early Church*, p. 43.
14. Cyprian, *Ep.* ii (viii), 3, *PL* 4, 233. The whole sentence runs in Latin, *Salutant vos fratres qui sunt in vinculis, et presbyteri et tota ecclesia, quae et ipsa cum summa sollicitudine excubat pro omnibus qui invocant nomen Domini.*
15. *Rationabili obsequio celebratur hodierna festivitas [the anniversary], ut in persona humilitatis meae ille [i.e. Peter] honoretur, in quo et omnium pastorum sollicitudo cum commendatarum sibi ovium custodia perseverat, et cujus dignitas etiam in indigno haerede non deficit. Unde venerabilium quoque fratrum et consacerdotum meorum desiderata mihi et honoranda praesentia hinc sacratior est atque devotior, si pietatem hujus officii in quo adesse dignati sunt, ei principaliter deferunt, quem non solum hujus sedis praesulem, sed et omnium episcoporum noverunt esse primum.* ... SC 200, Léon le Grand, *Sermons* (ed. R. Dolle), Paris, 1973, p. 260.
16. *Leo episcopus urbis Romae omnibus episcopis per Campaniam, Picenum, Tusciam et universas provincias in Domino ... quae [i.e. breaches of ecclesiastical canons and discipline] si non qua debemus vigilantia desecemus, illi qui nos speculatores esse voluit, excusare non possumus, permittentes sincerum corpus Ecclesiae, quod ab omni macula purum custodire debemus, ambientium improba contagione foedari ...* *PL* 54, 610BC, *Ep.* IV. (In *Ezk* 3: 17 the Vulgate has the word *speculator*, which in the A.V. and R.V. is rendered 'watchman'.
17. From the biography, *Lev Gillet: 'A Monk of the Eastern Church'*, by E. Behr-Sigel, originally written in French, translated by H. Wright, Fellowship of St Alban & St Sergius, 1999, p. 297. The abbey of Chevetogne in Belgium is a Benedictine community, which is committed to the reunion of Roman Catholics and Orthodox, and in which a number of its members live and worship as monks of the Eastern rite.
18. R. Schutz, *Violent for Peace* (tr. E. Chisholm and the Taizé Community), revised ed. 1981 (1st ed. 1970), Oxford, p. 59.

Holy Orders and Completeness of the Church

19. Homily at the Lambeth Conference of Anglican Bishops, 1998, quoted by Bishop C. Hill, 'Lambeth 1998 and the Unity of the Church', *Tufts Review*, 2/2, November 1998, p.75.
20. F. Sullivan, S.J., in *The Tablet*, 15 May 1999, p. 689, writing about *The Gift of Authority* which had been launched at Westminster Abbey on 12 May. (His words are based on *The Gift of Authority*, 47, p. 33f.) It is only fair to point out that the report has provoked a hostile reaction on the part of some Evangelical Anglicans.
21. C. Hill, op. cit., p. 79.
22. N. Lash, in *The Tablet*, 2 October, 1999, p. 1317. It would be a pity not to include a further sentence from the same article: 'Whether it be matter for celebration or lament that, whereas most Catholics expect the Pope to pronounce almost daily on each and every subject under the sun, they rarely look to their own bishop to teach them anything, this is a thoroughly untraditional state of affairs.'
23. Leading Article, *The Tablet*, 27 May, 2000, p. 707.
24. E. Duffy, *Saints and Sinners*, Yale University Press, 1997, pp. 290, 292.
25. Tillard, *The Bishop of Rome*, pp. 91f., quoting G. Dix, *Jurisdiction in the Early Church*, p. 42.
26. E. Schillebeeckx, *The Church with a Human Face*, p. 264.
27. 'On Ecclesial Conciliarity,' *The Legacy of St Vladimir*, 1990, p. 214, n. 9.
28. Op. cit., p. 16.
29. Above, p. 131.

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ABBREVIATIONS

<i>PG</i>	<i>Patrologia Graeca</i>	<i>BCP</i>	<i>Book of Common Prayer</i>
<i>PL</i>	<i>Patrologia Latina</i>	<i>ASB</i>	<i>Alternative Service Book</i>
<i>SC</i>	<i>Sources Chrétiennes</i>	<i>CW</i>	<i>Common Worship</i>

INDEX

A

- Act of Synod 70, 71, 121
Aelia Capitolina 59
Afanassieff, N., *L'Eglise du Saint-Espirit* 27, 28, 54, 101, 102
Alexandria 46, 48, 59
All are Called – Towards a Theology of the Laity 19, 129
Ambrose, St., (Bishop of Milan) 62, 74, 113, 124
Anglicanism 12, 72, 79, 98
Anglican Church of Canada 68
(Anglican) Episcopal Church of the USA 68
Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission, *The Gift of Authority* 114f.,
120, 129, 132f., 140, 141
Arles, Council of 52
Augustine, St., (Bishop of Hippo) 10, 45, 64, 80

B

- Balthasar, H. Urs Von, 18, 29, 118
Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry 20, 100, 112, 129
Barnes, E., (Bishop of Richborough) 70, 84, 121f., 125f.
Barnett, J. M., 31, 48, 55
Bishops and Dioceses 67, 83
bishop at Lambeth 66
Bishop in Charge of the Convocation of American Episcopal Churches in
Europe 72
Botte, B., 103, 110, 111, 112, 113
Bradshaw P. F., 37, 85
Burnham, A., (Bishop of Ebbsfleet) 119

C

- Caesarea 59
Calvin, J. 12, 50, 81, 82, 114
Capper, B. J. 24, 25, 34, 38
Cassian, John, St. 52, 62
Cassidy, Cardinal E., 135
Catholicity ... A Report ... 122, 129
Celtic Church in Ireland 68
Church of England General Synod 9, 67, 75, 78
Church of Scotland 81 *see also* Presbyterianism
Church of South India 68, 99
Clement, St. *First Epistle* 33ff., 44, 47, 92, 112, 122, 132, 134

Codex Iuris Canonici, Canon 351 65, 83 : Canon 376 65
 College of Cardinals 47
 Collins, J. N. *Diakonia* 31
 Constantine I Emperor 46, 48, 54, 57f.
 Corinth, Church In 33, 34, 35, 92, 122
 Cosgrave, B., 'Structure of Authority' 74, 84
 Cross, L. Melkite Archdeacon 79
 Crowe, P., 70, 72
 Crown Appointments Commission 75
 Cullmann, O. 140
 Cyprian, (Bishop of Carthage) 40f., 44, 47, 56, 61, 134, 140

D

deacons 8 and *passim*
 diaconate 8 and *passim*
 diakonia 27, 60
Didache 33, 36, 37, 40, 56
 Divine Liturgy 60, 84
 Dix, G. 17 and *passim*
 Duffy, E. 21, 44, 117, 136

E

Eames Commission 70, 84
 Easton, B.S. 112
 ecclesiology 8 and *passim*
 Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople 65
 Edict of Milan 46, 128
 Edwards, S. L. 71, 123
 Eleazar and Ithamar 93, 109, 117
 episcopacy 9 and *passim*
Episcopacy in the Church of England 67
Episcopal Ministry 19 and *passim*
 Episcopal Representative to H.M. Forces 72
 episcopate 10 and *passim*
 Eucharist 11 and *passim*
 Eusebius 60, 63
 Evans, G. R. 19, 28, 44, 67, 123
 Evdokimov, P. 86

F

Faith and Order Advisory Group, *The Priesthood of the Ordained Ministry* 44, 61, 77
 Farrer, A. M. 8, 60
 'flying bishops' 70, 121

For Such A Time As This 9f., 14, 62, 127, 130
Freestone, W. H. 62
Furlong, M. 84

G

Gillet, L. 134
Gore, C. G. 8
Green, M. 28, 44, 76f., 126
Greenslade, S. L. 140
Greenwood, R. 19, 26, 77, 115, 129
Guerric 19

H

Hannaford, R. 62
Harvey, A. E. 9, 47, 84
Hebert, A. G. 41f., 48
Henry VIII 66, 75
high-priesthood 35ff.
High Mass 80
Hill, C., (Bishop of Stafford) 135, 141
Hippolytus, St., 86ff., 90ff., 96, 101ff., 111, 132
Hope, D., (Archbishop of York) 19
Hopko, T. 16f., 53, 65f., 138

I

Ignatius, St., (Bishop of Antioch) 13, Chs. II & III *passim*, 48, 54, 68, 90, 91, 92, 105, 108, 120, 126, 132
Irenaeus, St., (Bishop of Lyons) 37, 58f., 133, 140

J

Jalland, T. G. 44, 82, 93
Jenkins, D. 7
Jensen, P., (Archbishop of Sydney) 122
Jerome, St. 52, 63, 93f
John XXIII, Pope 83
John Chrysostom, St., (Archbishop of Constantinople) 61, 62
John Paul II (Pope) 83, 137f.
Justin Martyr 44

K

Kallistos [Ware], (Bishop of Diokleia) 4f., 131
Kirk, K. E., (Bishop of Oxford) 48
Knox, W. L. 20, 32

L

Lambeth Conferences 72, 99, 131, 135
Last Supper 27, 28, 38
Lash, N. 129, 135f., 141
Leo I, St., (Pope) 19, 134, 136, 140
Leonine Sacramentary 91, 93, 102
Levites 36, 56, 102, 105, 113
Lightfoot, J. B., (Bishop of Durham) 24, 140
Lobinger, F., (Bishop of Aliwal North) 77, 126
Lubac, H. de 11, 139
Luther, M. 12

M

Mackenzie, K. D., (Bishop of Brechin) 12, 20, 81
McPartlan, P. 11, 16, 108
Maskell, W., *Monumenta Ritualia Ecclesiae Anglicanae* 110, 111, 113
Maximus the Confessor, St. 31
Methodism / Methodists 77, 79, 80, 100, 127
Monepiscopacy 34, 57
Morris, L. 83
Moses 91, 92, 93, 96, 109, 117

N

Nairne, A. 43
Newman, Cardinal J. H. 30, 117

O

Origen 59, 63
Orthodoxy & Orthodox Churches 12, 65, 72, 73, 84, 95, 107
O'Shea, W. J. 95

P

papacy 117, 133, 136ff.
Paul, St. 7, 24, 39, 96, 116, 132
Paul VI (Pope) 70
Peter, St. 33, 41, 132, 134, 137
Pius XII (Pope) 134
Pius IV (Pope) 9
Porter, H. B. 102f., 111, 112
pre-Nicene 45, 57, 60, 75, 82, 133
presbyter/priest and presbyterate 9, 23 and *passim*
Presbyterianism 12, 50, 114
Price, T. 128f.

Provincial Episcopal Visitors 70, 71, 75, 121

R

Ramsey, A. Michael, (Archbishop of Canterbury) 14f., 53, 134

Ratcliff, E. C. 99

Reformation 12, 66, 69, 72, 82, 88, 98

Robinson, J. A. T. 20

Roman Catholic / Catholicism 9 and *passim*

Roman Curia 65, 136

Roman 'primacy' 133

Rome 33 and *passim*

Runcie, Robert (Archbishop of Canterbury) 66

S

Sanhedrin / Synedrion 23, 49, 91f.

Sarum Pontifical 88, 91

Sarum rite 98, 103

Schillebeeckx, E. 9, 32, 129, 137

Schmemmann, A. 50, 52f., 54

Schutz, R. 135

Scobie, R. 83

Staniloae, D. 18, 21

Stephen, St. 104, 113

Sullivan, F. 135, 141

Sykes, S., (Bishop of Ely) 15, 17, 20, 78, 119

Symeon (Studite Monk) 62

T

Telfer, W. 60

Tertullian 44

Tillard, J-M. R. 7, 47, 61, 137

Tractarians 81

Trent, Council of 9f.

V

Vatican II 9f., 70, 82, 117, 136

von Balthasar *See* Balthasar

W

Welsby, P. A. 83

Wesley Deaconess Order 79

Western rites 36

Williams, R., (Archbishop of Canterbury) 78

Wybrew, H. 50

Z

Zizioulas, J. (Metropolitan of Pergamum) 11 and *passim*

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ISBN 1-905226-00-4



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